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LITTLE CHILDREN.

BY SARAH D. HOBART.

Like the sound of April rain-drops
Falling on the waking earth;
Like the murmur of the waters
Where the valley stream hath birth;
Like the night-bird's tender warble,
Or the wind among the leaves,
Come the voices of the children
Through the holy Sabbath eves.

Little children, Heaven bless you!
Christ's sweet messengers below;
Making bright the night of sorrow,
Cheering hearts oppressed with woe.
"Let them come!" the Saviour murmured,
Knowing well how pure and true
Are the souls of little children
Sprinkled with the Heavenly dew.

There are clouds to dim the future,
There are crosses to be borne,
And the path where duty leads us
Is beset by many a thorn.
But the love of little children
Cheers us ever on our way;
Angel-guides unto the Heaven
Beaming 'neath the perfect day.

THE GHOST OF NORMAN PARK; OR, Two Women Wronged.

BY MARY ATHERSTONE BIRD.

LADY NORMAN WRITING THE NOTES TO HER FATHER.

CHAPTER V.

The morning dawned as brightly as though no deed of horror were contemplated in the dark abysses of man's hateful passions.

Mr. Smedley was in high spirits: and Sir John Norman's laugh rang as loudly, though not quite so heartily, as his own.

Lady Norman watched them from a window until they were lost to sight among the trees. She was still gazing down the avenue, and the tears were gathering in her large blue eyes and falling unnoticed, so deeply was she wrapped in thought, when a light step aroused her, and turning round, she saw that it was Mrs. Briggs with her account book, awaiting her usual audience.

"I cannot attend to anything this morning, Briggs," said the young lady, wiping away her tears; "bring your books to-morrow, please. I feel so anxious and unhappy about my father!—I wish I had begged him to stay at home this morning. But I laughed at Sir John for the very same thing last evening, so I could not very well confess that I felt still more uneasy only a few hours later. Oh, how I wish he had not gone!"

"I trust no harm may happen to Mr. Smedley, my lady," said the housekeeper, "but still I would not neglect such a warning as you seem to have had. If your ladyship would allow me to advise you, I should say, send out several of the men on horseback the way they are gone, so they may be at hand. Your ladyship might write notes to your father as an excuse, and at all events they could bring back word that he was safe. Oh! be quick—be quick—write, and send them off. Here is your writing-desk. Get the notes ready, while I go and have the horses saddled. My husband knows all the dangerous places, and he'll tell them where to go."

The decision and energy of the housekeeper's manner and character completely dominated over the gentle spirit of Lady Norman. Without a word she began to write with the utmost rapidity.

In half an hour five mounted messengers were dispatched in various directions.

In the meantime, Sir John and his unsuspecting guest had cantered over some miles of country—park, arable and pasture—and were now entering a belt of thick woodland, covering a steep declivity about a mile from the house. The baronet's voice still rang loudly, and his boisterous laugh was as frequent as ever; but his speech was incoherent, and his laugh was forced.

They approached the bottom of the hill, where the ground was covered with large rough stones. While guiding their horses carefully among these, a sudden silence fell upon the two riders. Mr. Smedley, not being an expert horseman, was somewhat nervous. Sir John remarked this; his keen and crafty eyes wandered round in all directions to see that no witness of the deed he meditated was lurking near.

All was still. The place was lonely. There were neither nuts nor blackberries, birds' nests nor wild strawberries to tempt the truant urchins of the village within its wild precincts. The doomed victim was intent upon picking out the safest footing for his horse. Sir John gave the animal a smart cut with his whip, causing it to start and plunge forward. The frightened rider drew the rein hard up, and his treacherous companion, standing in his stirrups, glared at him with the ferocity of a tiger. The butt-end of his heavy hunting-whip whirled in the air; there was the sound of a blow; the horse again darted forward, and the old man fell off, head foremost.

Did Sir John Norman's imagination deceive him, or did he hear, indeed, a wild and prolonged shriek echoing through the wood? He could not tell—nay, in his confusion and excitement, he scarcely heard it; but never will that scene of blood arise upon his memory—and when, unless stupefied by intoxication, will it be absent from it?—but his brain will ring with that loud, unearthly wail.

The murderer leaped to the ground, and turned over the body of his victim. Half measures would be fatal; the work must not be left unfinished.

A brief inspection convinced him that no second blow was needed, and he checked the insane impulse that prompted him to strike again, and thus betray to the world that the deed was the result of design, and not of accident.

Trembling in every limb, and reeling like a drunken man, Sir John climbed again into his saddle. The shortest way to the house lay through a dense thicket of underwood, overshadowed by forest-trees. He looked at the narrow path, and shuddered—fearing to enter its dark mazes.

The boughs hung so low that they might touch him as he passed, and one fantastic holly-bush that stood in advance of the rest, looked like a human figure with one arm outstretched, ready to clutch at him.

He looked back at the road which he had just traversed with that kind-hearted old man as he cheerfully talked over his benevolent plans for the advancement of the poor. The solemn wood extended up the hill—silent, except when the dead leaves fell, or those already on the ground were stirred by the light foot of the timorous hare.

He looked to right and left—but there was no escaping either way; nothing for it but to dash through the dismal shades before him. Summoning his resolution, he at last set spurs to his horse, and rushed on as though a fiend were following close behind.

On emerging from the wood he came suddenly upon another horseman. Not recognizing one of his own servants, the guilty wretch turned and sought to fly; but the man's voice re-assured him.

"If you please, Sir John, I've brought a note from my lady," he began, but stopped in alarm at the white face and ghastly staring eyes that his master turned upon him.

"Ride on—ride on, Tom," said Sir John, recovering himself by a strong effort, "Mr. Smedley has been thrown from his horse, near the old slate quarry, and I fear he is much hurt, if not killed. Go, and stay with him while I call more help."

He galloped on, "staying no further question," while the groom, who was no other than our old friend, Tom Warren, continued his way through the wood.

"It was not for nothin' I seen that ghost then," soliloquized Tom, "for I know very well I seen it, let 'em say what they will. So it was the poor old gentleman that was doomed, was it? Lord ha' mercy on us all!"

With this devout aspiration, which was probably the nearest approach to a prayer which was to be found in honest Tom's theological acquirements, he pushed on, anxiously speculating on what was to happen next. But whatever he might have anticipated, it fell far short of the reality that met his sight on quitting the dark copse that had so terrified the guilty conscience of his master.

The body of Mr. Smedley lay upon the rough ground. There was a large wound on the side of his head, from which the blood was flowing. But this ghastly spectacle failed to rivet the man's attention, for kneeling beside the corpse was a female figure clothed in a flowing gray dress, in whom Tom, to his unspeakable dismay, recognized the ghost that had so terrified him in the stable.

The tramp of his horse's feet aroused her attention. She started up, and advanced hastily toward him with her arms extended, in an attitude of supplication. This looked so awfully like casting a spell upon him, that Tom turned and fled. But in a few minutes, finding there was no pursuit, he paused, and finally summoned courage to return.

As he once again came upon the open space where the body was lying, he found that the ghost was gone, and Mr. Smedley's horse was sniffing, with an uneasy and timorous air, at his master's corpse. Tom's experience was sufficient to convince him that life was quite extinct, and planting himself for safety between the two horses, he awaited, with what patience he could command, the arrival of those whom Sir John had gone to summon.

The poor fellow's natural feelings of awe and dread at finding himself thus alone in such a desolate place, keeping guard over the body of a man who had just met with a violent death, were much enhanced by the consciousness that a being of another world, who, if all tales were true, had also come to a tragical end by her own act, had only a few minutes previously, stood on that very spot, and might of course return when least expected.

The presence of the horses was very comforting, for he still placed considerable faith in the instinctive antipathy which these animals are said to exhibit toward beings of another world, notwithstanding the extraordinary conduct of Gray Meg in caressing the ghost of her former mistress.

A long and dreary time it was to him before the clattering of hoofs and the confused murmur of awe-subdued voices, announced the approach of those who came prepared to remove the body. They brought with them a hastily constructed litter, and in the foremost horseman, Tom was delighted to recognize Dr. Waldron, the gentleman on whom, it will be remembered, Sir John had endeavored to throw the suspicion of having eloped with the lady who had for a time borne the title of his wife.

The doctor leaped from his horse, and kneeling beside the body, placed his hand upon the heart, lifted the eyelids, and applied other tests to ascertain whether life was extinct.

"There's no hope, I'm afraid, sir, is there?" inquired Tom, respectfully touching his hat.

"Not a spark," said the doctor, who was now examining the wounds on the head: "death must have been instantaneous. Were you present when the accident happened?"

"No, sir. Mr. Smedley was riding with Sir John, and was thrown coming down this hill. He was a very timid rider, poor gentleman!"

"How come you here, then?"

"I was bringing a note, sir, that my lady sent to her father, when I met my master riding home as hard as he could gallop; and he bid me come on here, and wait with Mr. Smedley, for he was much hurt, if not killed outright. That's all I know about it, sir."

Dr. Waldron continued his examination. Close beside the head there was a large, sharp stone on which the old man must have fallen, for it was spattered with blood, and some white hairs adhered to it. But the wound inflicted by it was not sufficient to cause death; and there were other indications evident to the keen eye of the experienced surgeon, for which it was not easy to account. Behind the right ear he discovered a contused wound, about four inches in length, and marked at regular intervals by deeper indentations, from which blood was still flowing. From its situation he had no doubt that this was the fatal injury, yet it could not have been inflicted by the fall. The arms, too, were not extended as a man instinctively does in falling, but lay helpless by his side, one still grasping the whip.

Dr. Waldron had strong suspicions that the death-blow had been inflicted before Mr. Smedley fell from his horse, but he kept his thoughts to himself, merely inquiring whether the groom had altered the position of the corpse. On being answered in the negative, he desired all present to take notice of the position in which it lay, and the general appearances, and then rode off rapidly to attend to Lady Norman, leaving the others to bring home the body.

Many things, in the meantime, had happened in the house. As soon as Lady Norman had dispatched her messages to her father, on the prompting of the energetic Mrs. Briggs, that worthy woman retreated to her own parlor, to relieve her feelings by an expression of her anxiety and agitation, a consolation in which, for particular reasons, she could not indulge in the presence of any one but her husband.

"You were very foolish to encourage her nervous fancies," was his encouraging remark. "I don't believe there's any mischief intended. And if there was, how should she know it? Prezentiments is all stuff. I've had lots of prezentiments in my time, but they never came to nothing."

"Don't people that sleep together often dream the same dream?" said his wife; "and if one person can dream another person's dream, why couldn't they think another person's thoughts? It's my firm belief that he's been hatching some wicked plot all the night, and perhaps talking of it in his sleep, and so she's come to dream about it. And, besides, I tell you I don't know all. There's other people know more than I do, and I act as I'm directed. What in the name of goodness is that noise about?"

They both ran out to ascertain the cause of a sudden commotion in the hall, and found that it was occasioned by the unexpected arrival of Dr. Waldron. Lady Norman had never heard his name, but when informed by Mrs. Briggs that he was an old friend of Sir John's, she hastened to give him a cordial welcome.

After a short interview, the doctor's appearance, his tone of conversation, and quiet, self-possessed, gentlemanly manners, interested the lady so strongly, that she urged him to change his flying visit into a stay of a week at least; and she even communicated to him the strange and increasing disquietude under which she was then suffering with respect to her father's safety.

"I now feel bound to remain for some hours at least," said he, "for it may assist in allaying your uneasiness to know that professional aid is at hand, if it should be needed. But you have already acted so promptly and vigorously that I do not anticipate any very terrible fulfilment of your presentiments."

Dr. Waldron was standing by a window as he spoke, and immediately afterward, he muttered some hasty words of apology and left the room. He had caught sight of Sir John Norman, riding fast toward the house alone, and seemingly in great disorder.

Lady Norman's morning-room was in the eastern wing of the building, so that he had some distance to traverse before he reached the hall. When he did so, he met the baronet coming out of the library. Sir John started at the sight of his visitor, and it was plain that the recognition gave him anything but pleasure; but he dissembled his annoyance, welcomed him with friendly words, related the accident that had befallen his father-in-law, and begged him to go to Lady Norman, who he feared, might suffer from hearing the news too hastily.

"Nay," replied the doctor, "I shall go where I am most needed."

And forthwith he gave instructions for making a hasty litter on which the injured man might be safely carried, and set off at the head of the party.

Thus it fell to Sir John to communicate the distressing intelligence to his wife, and it may easily be imagined that he performed the task with no very good grace. Indeed, but for the violence of her own emotions, she would doubtless have detected, amid his confused and contradictory statements, the trouble of the conscious murderer.

Sir John Norman was truly in a pitiable state. All his boastful courage was gone—all presence of mind was lost—he was a slave to the most abject and groundless fears. To his guilty soul the unexpected arrival of Dr. Waldron at this crisis, seemed to be the first step of that avenging fate which the murderer feels is pursuing him from the moment his crime is committed.

While talking with his poor, distracted wife, and endeavoring to go through some stereotyped formula of consolation, his eyes were constantly staring through the window, where he dreaded to see the slow procession of those who bore home the body of his victim, or still worse, some indication that Waldron's quick eyes had detected evidence of his guilt.

At length a single horseman came across the park at full gallop. It was Dr. Waldron.

Sir John left his wife, now—happily for herself—insensible, and ran out, but whether to meet him or escape from him, he hardly knew.

The doctor, as he entered the hall, observed that a hat and gloves, with a small riding-whip, were placed in a conspicuous position on one of the tables. He was certain that these things had not been there before he went out, for he had put his own hat on that very table, and must have seen them, had they been there. His mind being full of suspicions of foul play, he hastily asked one of the servants whose hat that was.

"I think it's my master's, sir," replied the man, "but I never knew him put it there before."

"Is this his whip?"

"Yes, sir, that is Sir John's; but it's not the one he generally uses. He generally likes his hunting-whip."

"Ah! Then he is not gone out again."

Dr. Waldron's manner was so composed that the servant had no suspicion that in thus fixing his attention upon the state of the hat and whip, he was preparing a link in a chain of evidence which might lead to the baronet's being convicted of murder.

But whatever he might suspect, Dr. Waldron scrupulously avoided giving the smallest hint which might arouse a similar train of thought in any other mind, until he was thoroughly satisfied that he should not thereby commit a fearful injustice. And even should all doubts be dispelled from his own judgment, he shrank from inflicting so much agony on that poor girl, for whom he already felt the deepest sympathy. Yet she must know all, for better were any suffering—death—insanity itself—than to rest, ignorant of the truth, in the arms of her father's murderer.

With an inward prayer that this question might be decided without his agency, he turned to enter the library, recollecting that Sir John had gone there immediately on his return, and thinking that he might discover there some proof of his guilt. As he was at the door, the baronet seized him by the arm.

"How did you find the poor old man?" he asked, in an agitated voice.

"Exactly as you left him—stone dead," replied the doctor, fixing a steady gaze upon the other's restless eye.

"Then, for Heaven's sake, go and tell my wife. I cannot return to her; I am quite unnerved."

"You must have been very near him when he fell," said Dr. Waldron, pointing to a small splash of blood upon Sir John's shirt front.

With the blind impulse of guilt the baronet hurriedly buttoned his coat over the tell-tale sign.

"I—I—I turned the body over, you know," he stammered out; "I daresay I'm spotted all over with blood. Ah! what's that?" he cried, with a gasping scream, as a large sweat-drop fell upon his hand from his own contorted forehead.

"Ugh! ugh! ugh!" he laughed, hysterically, when he saw what it was, "the sight of my poor wife's distress has made me as girlish as herself, I think. Do pray go to her at once, Waldron, that's a good fellow!"

Dr. Waldron had stood calmly observant while the guilty wretch thus laid bare his soul before him in his attempts to appear innocent of the crime. Without a word he now turned and went swiftly back to Lady Norman's room.

Sir John, after casting a cautious glance around, as though he were about to commit some deed that it was necessary to conceal, slunk into the library, and locked the door. Still glancing round, like one who fears detection, he hurried to a table which was covered by a heavy drapery that reached the floor. Raising the cloth, he sought eagerly for some object, which, apparently, he could not find. From being timid and cautious, he now became extravagantly violent. He dragged the table from its place; he pulled off the cover and threw it in a heap; he shook the curtains from their fastenings; he searched round and round the room. In vain—the thing he sought was not to be found there.

A loud knocking at the door startled him. He flung the cloth upon the table and cowered beneath it, following the first impulse to hide from the pursuit which he imagined had already commenced.

"Sir John! Sir John!" cried the well-known voice of one of his own servants, "will you please come to my lady?"

"Fool!" exclaimed the baronet, starting from his hiding-place. "I am bringing suspicion upon myself!"

He ran into the hall, but staggered back; for at that moment the litter on which lay the corpse of Mr. Smedley, was brought in and deposited at his feet.

He started aside, and fled away as though the avenger of blood were literally behind him.

CHAPTER VI.

While Sir John Norman was pursuing his vain search in the library, Mrs. Briggs, who had been in active attendance upon Lady Norman, ran with breathless speed to her own parlor, drew the bolt, and, opening a narrow door, concealed in the recess of a dark closet, she entered one of those apartments which had been so long abandoned to the family ghosts.

This room was furnished in an antique fashion, but with every attention to comfort. The carpet, though its rich colors were faded, was thick and exquisitely clean; the heavy furniture was highly polished; and though there was no grate in the wide fire-place, the bright andirons supported a pile of blazing logs that threw out a far more genial and cheerful warmth than a coal fire could afford. Yet, notwithstanding every effort to make the best of the room, there was a strange, gloomy, haunted look about it. The windows were tall and narrow, and half-covered with ivy, while lofty trees waved their long branches around, obscuring the light of day, and shutting out the prospect except at one spot where a glimpse could be had of the narrow dell on one side of which the house was built, and of the opposite bank, which presented an almost precipitous declivity, clothed with stunted brushwood. In the depth below rolled a dark stream, which after watering the park and grounds, here rushed, deep and rapid, in its straitened course through this weird ravine on its way to the ocean. The ceaseless, sullen moaning of the water, "chafing with the mountain's side," was heard in the room I have been describing, and added not a little to its solemn gloom. Yet there were many signs besides the roaring fire, that it was occupied, and by a person of taste and refinement. An embroidery frame stood near one of the windows, while drawing materials covered a table in another, and books and work lay about in various directions.

But the object that at once arrested the housekeeper's attention was a female figure that lay extended on the floor. She raised her gently, disclosing the face of a woman still young and eminently handsome, though pale and careworn. In her hand she held firmly a heavy hunting-whip, the handle of which was covered with blood, to which clung a few white hairs.

The reasoning of a quick-witted woman is so rapid, that men, who arrive at the same result by a slow process of logic, choose to call it instinct. Be it so; yet the bird that by a swift flight perches on a point of rock, is as surely there as the craggsman who lumbers after it, step by step.

It was by this intuitive insight that Mrs. Briggs comprehended the whole truth

when her eyes fell upon this whip, Sir John's, which she had seen in his hand when he rode out that morning.

She removed it with some difficulty from the young lady's grasp, and put it out of sight, before administering restoratives, by means of which she soon brought back her senses.

"Did you see it? Where is it?" asked the young lady, looking nervously round.

"It's safe, but I've put it out of sight," answered the housekeeper, "drink this glass of wine, and don't think about that now. Poor dear! you're half dead with fright."

"Oh, never mind me! I'm thinking about her. Great God! must that poor, innocent girl continue, in ignorance of his crime, to love that—no! there's no single word that can express his villainy! Oh, Mrs. Briggs, we must save her from him—we must do something for her!"

"There's time enough to think about that," said Mrs. Briggs, "for she is in good hands now; for who do you think has just come at the right moment? Dr. Waldron! And he'll take good care of her."

"We must take her away from him!" cried the lady, wildly, with her hands pressed to her throbbing temples, "tell Dr. Waldron to take her away! Oh! Mrs. Briggs! I saw him do it! He stood up in his stirrups and struck him! It was so sudden—all over in one minute—they were riding along talking, and then he struck him—and the poor old man fell down and never stirred. He did it with that," she continued, looking round with a shudder for the implement of death.

"Poor child! Poor child!" murmured the compassionate matron; "say no more about it now. Try not to think of it."

"I must—and I must speak of it too, for I may go mad, and not be able to tell what happened. I was there in the wood, I tell you, near the old quarry, and I saw Sir John Norman kill his wife's father by striking him on the back of his head with the handle of his hunting-whip. It was so sudden, I had no time to warn him of his danger, for the first thing I saw was the infliction of the death blow. Sir John dismounted, and turned the body over. Had he raised his arm again I would have screamed out and tried to stop him. I would have gone to him, but my limbs refused to move. He went away, and then I could go to the old man, but he was dead. I ran back here through the wood and garden, or I think I flew, for I reached home as soon as he did, going round by the park. I thought of Mr. Smedley's will, and determined to secure it, for I knew there was some roguery on foot about it, so I took his keys out of his pocket, and ran home to get the will. And I was in the library when that monster came in and threw that dreadful thing under the table. He did not see me in the dark corner but ran out again, and then I took it and brought it here. And—oh, heavens! here are the keys! I have not got the will after all! Wait here till I come back—if any one is in the library I must trust to you to call them out."

Mrs. Briggs was delighted to see that all incoherence and wildness vanished from the young lady's manner as soon as a demand was made upon her for energetic action.

In a few moments the lady in gray returned.

"He is there," she whispered, "seeking for his whip. How can you draw him away?"

"I'll manage it, never fear," said Mrs. Briggs, starting off on her errand. She managed so well that in a few minutes Sir John received the summons that had so greatly alarmed him.

The attention of the whole household was so entirely occupied by the arrival of Mr. Smedley's body, just at this time, that the lady ran no risk of being interrupted while taking possession of the will. The way by which she obtained such ready access to the library was by a narrow passage which had been so long disused that its very existence was forgotten; while the door, being in an obscure corner, and with no external fastening to distinguish it from the rest of the dark oak panelled walls, had escaped the observation of several generations of housemaids.

It was well for her that she had little difficulty in finding the will, for she was only just entering the private passage when the door of the library opened, to give admittance to Dr. Waldron and "Lawyer Downey," as he was familiarly called.

"The most awful visitation that ever came within my knowledge!" the latter was saying as they entered; "it's frightful! positively frightful!—and only yesterday now the dear old gentleman was laughing and joking with me in this very room!—a most entertaining companion, my dear sir; such a fund of anecdote!—so full of originality and humor. You had not the pleasure of his acquaintance? Ah, that's a pity. Well, I must say, I never experienced such a shock in my life. It's really awful. As I rode up the avenue just now, I was actually repeating some of his jokes to myself, and thinking how I should make him laugh at a riddle that I heard this morning; and then to hear that he was lying a corpse in the very house where I had expected to crack a joke with him! It is really—I don't know how to express my feelings, I cannot give utterance to them. It is impossible."

Here the lawyer sighed heavily, wiped his nose and his spectacles, and by an emphatic gesture, gave up, as a dead failure, any attempt to express his sensibilities in words. No answer was made to his protestations, but his silent auditor stood with his calm, observant eyes fixed upon his face, until the attorney began to wince under them.

"I presume I have the honor of addressing a friend of the family?" said Downey.

"I trust I may be considered one," replied Dr. Waldron.

"Then, my dear sir," continued the lawyer, dropping at once into a familiar tone, "has our poor friend remembered, under these very trying circumstances, to perform the sad but necessary duty of sealing up the papers of the deceased?"

"I do not know," replied the doctor, "but I think not."

"Then I should wish him to see to it at once," said Downey, "The fact is, that I yesterday drew up a will for the deceased Mr. Smedley, and it was of such a nature that any sincere friend of Sir John's, knowing the purport of it as I do, would desire that no punctilio of etiquette should be neglected."

"Where is it?" asked the doctor; "shall I seal it up?"

"Pardon me," replied Downey, in his blandest tones, "but just put it to yourself, my dear sir—in his own house, and as a near relative of the deceased—is not Sir John himself the proper person? There would be, it strikes me, and no doubt you will see it in the same light, a slight want of delicacy, if I may so express it, in any one else assuming this responsible duty. You will excuse my freedom in giving utterance to my sentiments with so little reserve, but I am a plain, straightforward man, and have not the talent to be a hypocrite if I would; and I think—that is, I venture to hope—you will perceive that my view of this question is the right one."

"I believe you are right," said the doctor, abruptly, "I will send Sir John to see to it. A d—d sneak!" he muttered, as he went up-stairs, "if there's any rascality about this affair, I could swear he's concerned in it."

Lady Norman had been removed to her bed, where she now lay, half-insensible, watched over by her maid and the indefatigable Mrs. Briggs, while Sir John wandered restlessly about—ashamed of appearing to neglect his wife, yet shrinking with terror from her presence.

At the slightest hint he ran down to perform the melancholy duty that devolved upon him, while the sympathizing doctor noiselessly approached the bedside of his patient.

As he stood looking, with eyes full of compassion, upon the poor sufferer, who lay with her face buried in the pillow, a gentle touch on the arm claimed his attention, and looking round, he saw the housekeeper.

Very few words had passed between these two people, but by that sort of freemasonry, or natural selection, by which, in moments of unusual excitement like the present, kindred spirits recognise and claim each other, a strong though tacit understanding and confidence had sprung up between them.

"Is there a lawyer down-stairs, sir?" she whispered.

"Yes," he replied, retreating to a window, lest their voices might rouse Lady Norman from the half-sleep into which she had fallen; "a dirty-looking fellow, with a perpetual smirk upon his face. Did Mr. Smedley employ him to make his will?"

"Yes, sir."

"What could induce him to trust such a fellow?" he said; "if ever I saw liar and cheat written upon any human countenance they are upon his. That will must be looked to."

"It has been looked to already," replied the housekeeper; "it is safe, so take no notice at present, sir. No doubt you will hear more about it."

"You are a very strange woman," said Dr. Waldron, looking at her from under his bent brows.

"Strange circumstances make strange people, sir," she answered; "and you may find by and by that there are some stranger than me."

"Enigmatical and ungrammatical," muttered the doctor to himself, as she left him to attend to the patient who was moaning uneasily, "but trustworthy and honest, as that dirty attorney is the reverse."

(To be continued in our next. Commenced in No. 25.)

CLAUDIA'S TRIUMPH.

BY CLEMENTINE MONTAGU,

AUTHOR OF "THE COST OF CONQUEST," ETC.

CHAPTER LV.

REUNITED.

Alas, by some degree of woe
We every bliss must gain;
The heart can ne'er a transport know
That never feels a pain.
—*Lord Lyttleton.*

Claudia had started up in bed wildly excited. Like a revelation the truth had burst upon her at the first words Dr. Bleckton had spoken.

"I know it all as clearly as though I had been there," she said, excitedly, laying her hand upon the doctor's arm. "He, Lord Nortonshall, is dead. Is it not so?"

"Yes."

"I was sure of it," she murmured. "Tell me all the circumstances."

"Lie down again," answered Dr. Bleckton, soothingly. "You shall be satisfied."

She obeyed him—indeed, she had no choice, for the momentary strength which inspired her had vanished, and she was completely exhausted.

"Now then, tell me," she said. "How was it?"

"I will not speak to you about it till you are calm," he answered. "It was as well that you should know it, or I would not have told you; but you shall hear no more until you have promised to be quiet."

"I will—I will; but don't keep me in suspense. Let me know all, though I almost dread to hear it. Did he die a natural death?"

"No, by an accident, as I think. He has taken poison."

"Ah, that was what I feared. But it was not my fault."

"Yours?"

"No; I tried to get the bottle."

"Hush!" he said, in a warning voice. "It was a mistake, as will be proved—at least, I think so."

"But how did it happen?"

"He desired to be left alone this afternoon, telling his valet that he was going to try and get some sleep. Brown spoke about his having some medicine for the purpose."

"Ah, I see—I see. He took the poison."

"Yes, so it turns out, for when Brown went to his room to call him, he found the door locked; and not receiving any answer to his repeated knockings, he became alarmed, and had it broken open. His lordship was dead then, but they sent for me and other medical men; but all the physicians in the world could not have brought him back to life."

"Will there be any inquiry?"

"Yes, they will be obliged to hold an inquest; but the verdict is certain beforehand. The world does not know as we do, and will attribute it to accident."

"I wonder whether I am a very wicked woman, Doctor Bleckton?" said Claudia, when he had told his tale.

"Why, my dear?"

"Because I feel—not glad, I hope, but as if a load were lifted from me by this man's death."

"You know best what cause you have to feel relief," he answered, gravely. "'*De mortuis nil nisi bonum*' is a very good maxim in its way; but I don't think that even your tender conscience need feel very sorely troubled about this man's fate."

"And yet— Oh, it is horrible to think of," she said, with a shudder.

"Don't think about it, my dear; try and go to sleep. I will not leave the house to-night. You know I have to break the news in another quarter," he added, significantly.

"Yes, yes," eagerly responded Claudia. "Go to her at once."

And Doctor Bleckton, after a few whispered directions to Dorothy, who had returned to her mistress's bedside, left the room, but not the house. His assistance was required in another room, where his strange story was listened to by eager ears, while Claudia lay up-stairs with a strange sensation of peace at her heart, now that she knew she was indeed free, forever free, from Lord Nortonshall's hateful persecution.

"But not for my own sake," she murmured; "'tis for them that I rejoice. They will be happy, while I, alas, am desolate; but not for long—not for long!"

Claudia passed a very restless night; and when Dr. Bleckton saw her in the morning he looked very grave. She insisted upon rising and being dressed, however, though he strongly demurred to such a proceeding.

"I must," she said; "I shall stifle if I am kept mewed up here. Besides, you know we have a great many things to settle."

And so, indeed, it seemed; for after a visit she had paid to the doctor's other patient in the house, Claudia had a long conference with the doctor—and the result of their conversation was the dispatch of a note to the celebrated physician, Sir James Jeffson, asking him to call at Bayswater before the inquest on Lord Nortonshall.

It was also stated that Dr. Bleckton would be glad of his opinion on the state of health of Mademoiselle Claudia.

"Yes, it would be better," Claudia replied, in answer to the doctor's suggestion. "He might not come without a stronger motive than would be advisable to put on paper, and though I have as much faith in you as in any doctor in the world, it may be as well to have him. I need not follow his advice unless I like."

"He can give you none other than mine, mademoiselle," said Dr. Bleckton. "There can be no difference of opinion. Rest, perfect rest of body and mind, is what is necessary for your case."

"Aye, but it will no more keep me alive than you can restore life to that dead man, doctor. Oh, I'm not nervous, nor low-spirited either; but I feel I am not much longer for this world."

He made no answer to this speech; indeed, he had no heart to, for he was only too painfully aware that what Claudia had said was but the truth, and it relieved his mind greatly to find that she was aware of it.

Dr. Bleckton was one of those kindly, warm-hearted men who cannot bear to inflict suffering, and had long been dreading that he should have to break the intelligence of her dangerous condition to the actress, to whom death was approaching slowly, but with sure and insidious steps for all that. He left her now, promising to call again later in the day, and Claudia summoned Dorothy to her side.

"Mr. Vavasour will call again to-day, will he not?" she asked.

"He promised to."

"That is well. You need not deny me to him any more, Dorothy; but let me see him when he comes."

"Better not, dearie," responded the old woman; "you are not fit for company. He will be quite satisfied if I tell him how you are. You are too ill to talk."

"But I am not too ill, and I want to talk. I must finish that which I have commenced, you know."

Dorothy saw it was of no use trying to persuade her against it, but she grumbled to herself as she left the room.

"If she had never met him there wouldn't have been all this trouble and worry," she said to herself. "I wish with all my heart my poor lamb had never seen this country of fogs and misery."

True to his word, Frank made his appearance in the afternoon, and Dorothy, unwilling as she was, did not dare to disobey her mistress's orders, but conducted him into Claudia's room, where she reclined upon the sofa.

He was very much shocked at the change in her appearance, for which he was totally unprepared, and showed it by his manner, so much so that Claudia said, as she held out her hand to him—

"Do I frighten you, Frank? Am I indeed so altered?"

"Altered! Good heavens! Why, Claudia, what is the matter?"

"Only the beginning of the end," she answered, gently. "I have had much to weary and oppress me lately, and have broken down, as you see. Nay, do not grieve," she continued, as the young man's head went down, and a low cry escaped his lips. "No earthly power could have prolonged my life for many years. I have known that for a long time. After all, it is but going a little sooner."

"Alas, is everything I love going from me at once?" he exclaimed, passionately. "Ah, Claudia, I have no one on earth but you to live for now. Alma is gone, and I have neither home nor place in the world. Am I to lose you too?"

He broke down utterly at this point, and shed those bitter, scalding drops which sometimes force themselves from the strongest of men, and he was weak, miserably weak and overcome.

"Nay, Frank," she said, softly, "you have much to live for yet—more than you dream of."

"I have nothing," he answered, recklessly; "nothing to tie me to this world if you are taken from me. You gone, and Alma murdered—"

"No."

"No! As there is a Heaven above us, I say yes," he replied.

"And I as solemnly declare that you are wrong," said Claudia, outwardly calm, but with a feverish excitement in her brain.

"I do not understand you. Do you mean that she died a natural death?"

"Most certainly not."

"You are speaking in riddles, Claudia."

"I will solve them presently," she answered, with a faint smile. "Frank, I told you once to trust me implicitly."

"I have—I do; but you were powerless to save my darling."

"Indeed! Are you so sure of that?"

Frank looked at her with wild amazement; but no glimpse of her real meaning penetrated his brain. He thought she must be wandering, and tried to soothe her.

"I see you do not comprehend me even yet," she said, with a sad smile. "Do you remember what I told you concerning those phials."

"Yes."

"That the one contained a subtle poison, but the other was a mere narcotic."

"Well?"

"Well, Lord Nortonshall has died, and without doubt from the contents of one of those bottles. I saw Alma take what was in the other from his lordship's hands."

But still his brain refused to grasp the meaning of her words, and his sole answer was an astonished look.

"You saw, and did not stop her?" he said, bewildered.

"Even so. Can you draw no inference from what I have said?"

"Why, what—what would I think?" he almost gasped. "Oh, heaven, Claudia, what is it you would have me believe?"

"I bade you trust me," she answered. "Come with me, and I will show you how I have deserved your trust."

She rose with difficulty, and stood beside him.

"You will have to help me to walk," she said, sadly. "I am not strong enough now to walk alone. But we are not going far—only into the next room."

He threw his arm round her, and supported her feeble steps to the door of the room which she had indicated. With her hand upon the lock, she paused and turned to him.

"One moment," she said, and then she paused, her heart beating fearfully, and Frank thought that she would fall.

"There, I am better now," she went on. "Frank, when—when I am dead, you will think sometimes of me, will you not?"

"Ah, do not talk so."

"Well, well, I will not. But I want you to remember that I loved you, Frank—loved you so dearly that my every thought, my very life, was bound up in you. I may speak so now, and tell you. For me there will never be love, happiness, nor aught else in this world. There was a time, when I first knew of your love for her—nay, I do not mean to pain you—but at that time I thought that I should like to be revenged on you for your insensibility. I am revenged."

"How?"

She looked at him with a strange yearning in her eyes.

"Give me one kiss, Frank," she said, and tenderly, chivalrously, he pressed his lips to hers, and then she drew herself from his arms, and said—

"Go into that room, Frank. You will see how Claudia Wynne wreaks her vengeance, and obtains her greatest triumph."

She turned the handle as she spoke, and tottered back to the couch from which she had risen, and sank upon it in a passion of regretful tears.

But Frank Vavasour did not see her, for his eyes were gazing straight before him.

Was he distraught? No, it was real; no apparition would have met his outstretched arms with fervent clasp as this did. For one brief moment he had started back; but in the next, close to his heart, lying upon his breast, he beheld the living, breathing form of Alma.

CHAPTER LVI.

MR. GOLIGHTLY IS SOFTENED.

'Tis here to pluck the amaranthine flower
Of faith, and round the sufferer's temples bind
Wreaths that endure affliction's heaviest shower,
And do not shrink from sorrow's keenest wind.
—*Wordsworth.*

It was indeed Alma—very pale, and with dark rings under her eyes, which told of long suffering and endurance; but Alma herself, nevertheless!

Frank was the first to speak.

"My own, alive! thank Heaven!" was all that he could say.

"Yes," she murmured; "alive, to thank and bless my preserver every day of my life. I cannot feel any passionate joy. I have gone through such horrors that my very soul seems dead within me; but I can pray for her happiness. Ah! it is too late to pray for *him!*"

She spoke the last words with a long, shuddering sigh, and he guessed that she knew all concerning her husband's death.

"You know, then?" he said.

"That I am widowed? Yes. You would not have seen me else. Oh, it was horrible news!"

"What will you do now?"

"Go with my aunt. She is coming for me. I have no place in the world now. I am dead, you know."

She spoke in a strangely apathetic manner, which alarmed Frank; but he attributed it to the suffering and anxiety she had gone through, and strove to turn her thoughts into another channel, by speaking to her of her escape, and its probable results.

"Ah! I can think of nothing but the angel who has given me my life back again," she said, her cheek flushing with excitement. "And yet I hated her, Frank—oh, how I hated her! thinking she was striving to fill my place. How I misjudged her. She was plotting to save me, not to have me dead, as I thought."

"Claudia is indeed a noble-hearted woman," said Frank. "You will learn to love her, Alma."

"I have," she said.

And then they talked to each other for a little while on the strange events which had happened.

"I don't know how I'm to come to life again gracefully," she said, after a time. "But it will all be settled to-morrow. The doctor who was called in to—to *him*, is coming to see Claudia, and she will ask his advice. Had it not been for what happened yesterday, I should have been dead to the world forever."

"But now, my darling, you will live for me," he whispered, softly.

Alma blushed, and drew away from him.

"You must not talk like that," she said, "I want you to promise me you will be silent for the present about my recovery."

"I will tell no one."

"Not Austin Bertram, above all men!"

"Why him, particularly?"

"I don't know; but I distrust him."

"You need have no fear; he is the last man I would think of telling."

Alma was tired, and he saw it; so, with a promise to come back early in the morning, Frank departed with a lighter heart than he had known for many a day. He did not see Claudia again—she had gone to her own room, and Dorothy met him in the passage with a loving message, with which he was obliged to be content and went away.

Money is all-potent, and it worked wonders in hushing up the story of Lord Nortonshall's death, and his wife's sudden resuscitation. It was fortunate that the burial of the empty coffin had not taken place, for the report skilfully spread by the doctors, especially the eminent physician who had been summoned by Claudia, was to the effect that Alma's apparent decease was merely one of those strange trances, of which there have been records now and then in medical annals.

Claudia had told Sir James Jeffson the whole truth from beginning to end, hiding nothing, but placing the intended crime of the dead man in as faint a light as possible.

She introduced him to Alma, who confirmed her story, and he recommended that she should see the family lawyer, and one or two friends who knew her well, and then go into retirement for a while, till she felt able to resume her place in the world.

"That I shall never do," she said, sadly. "I want nothing but rest and quiet."

With Claudia the physician held a long conference, and when he rose to go resolutely refused the magnificent fee she would have forced upon him.

"No, my dear, no," he said, "not from you. You have amused and delighted me too often for me to take payment from you. Take my services as part of my appreciation and thorough enjoyment of your talent."

"I shall never exercise it again," she answered.

"T't, t't! Try to keep up your spirits," was all the reply he made; but there was a grave look upon his face, as, with a kind pressure of her thin hand, he took his leave and went away.

She returned to Alma with a smile upon her sweet face—indeed, there was seldom any but a happy expression on it now.

"Well?" said Alma, with an inquiring look.

"He will manage everything, my dear. You will be happy and tranquil yet, and forget all the misery you have suffered."

"Never! I can never do that. But what did he say about yourself? You promised to tell me."

"Not much; nothing but what I know already. I shall never act again!"

Alma bent her head to conceal the fast-falling tears from Claudia, who was quite calm. All that she loved in the world—this new-found faithful friend, and all—seemed to slip by her, and leave her stranded and alone, and her heart was very full.

"I only waited for his verdict," Claudia went on, after a pause, "to let Mr. Golightly know. I am engaged to him for twelve months longer. I shall not break our agreement; but it will be cancelled, for all that. I should have liked to play once more, for I loved my profession, and have many friends in it. I must write to the manager to-day."

"And to Frank, will you not? Tell him what I ought to have told him yesterday, but could not."

"That you would rather not see him?"

"Yes."

"I think you are right."

"I know I am," said Alma, in a low voice. "Ah! you are good and true; tell me, do you think it very wicked of me to feel as I do in the midst of all this horror? Am I wrong to have such joy in seeing him and hearing his voice once more?"

"I think you are a woman, Alma—a warm-hearted, loving woman. Wrong! Certainly not. It is but nature knocking at your heart. You can't help it. But, as you wish it, I will write and tell him to come here no more."

"I didn't mean that. Why should I keep your friends from you, especially—"

"Especially as my time on earth is so short, you would say. Well, I'll let him come to see me; but you can always keep out of the way—at least, for a time."

"Yes, it is better that I should not see him again just now. I will go to Italy with my aunt. Why should not you come too?" she continued, eagerly. "It might restore you."

"Nothing will ever restore me," answered Claudia, sadly. "I doubt whether any climate would even prolong my life by a few short weeks. But we can talk of this another time; I must write my letter to Mr. Golightly now."

But Claudia was spared the exertion, for the gentleman made his appearance before the letter was well commenced. It was not often that he visited Claudia at her own house; but something had brought him now.

Probably, Claudia thought, he had heard some rumors as to her health, and wished to see for himself whether there was any likelihood of his great attraction slipping through his fingers just at the commencement of a season in which he had laid out to do great things at the Elysium.

He was very much shocked at her altered looks, but made no remark upon it, accounting for his visit by the production of a new play, written expressly for her by Oxendon, the great dramatist.

"You will have to look out for another lady, Mr. Golightly," she said, laying the manuscript on the table. "I shall never play again."

"Not play! Impossible!"

"Neither in that or any other piece. See, I was just writing to tell you so."

And she showed him the sheet of paper, with "Dear Mr. Golightly" at the head of the page.

"I have suspected the truth for a long time past," she went on, in answer to the manager's look of chagrin; "but I waited for the decision of a physician before telling you. I have had his answer this morning. I must never attempt to play any more."

"Never?"

"Never. I am sorry to have to break the engagement, and if money can atone—"

"Nothing can atone to us for your absence, mademoiselle," he answered, gallantly. "Nothing can compensate the public for the loss of its darling, or me for the vacant place in my theatre."

"Oh, yes, something will," she replied, with a smile at his words. "We are but the creatures of an hour, Mr. Golightly, and next season the town will own another goddess, while the grass will flourish bravely over my forgotten grave."

"Not while there is a play to write or an actress to represent it," he broke in, warmly. "But are you sure of this?—is there no hope, no chance of your recovery?"

"Not the slightest. I know my fate, and that the question is merely one of time."

Mr. Golightly gazed at her, astonished at the calmness of her tone.

"Would not a warmer climate, perhaps, restore you?" he asked. "Native air sometimes works wonders."

"I shall not try it, Mr. Golightly. England is my home now and forever. All the friends I have in the world are here, and I would rather breathe my last amongst those who love me than return to Italy, where all I have is the memory of a sorrowful past."

There was nothing more to be said. Mr. Golightly saw that Claudia was almost content at the prospect, and felt that words of sympathy, however kindly meant, would but distress her; so he rose to go with a heavy heart, and more deeply affected at what he had heard than he would have cared to confess, for the worthy manager affected cynicism, and was not wont to give way to "the melting mood."

He had got as far as the door, when he turned and came back to Claudia.

"You'll let me come back sometimes and see you, will you not?" he said.

"As often as you like, old friend," replied Claudia. "I have not got so many friends to visit me that I cannot spare you an hour. But I must see all my companions at the theatre again. I will come the first day I am able to get as far, and bid them all farewell in person."

"Ah, my dear, you mustn't think of that yet. A change may come and set you up again."

"No change but the last great one will ever come to me."

She held out her hand, and Mr. Golightly gave it a warm pressure. He coughed huskily to dispel the choking sensation he felt at his throat, for it gave him a strange feeling to see this young, lovely, and attractive creature fading slowly but surely before his eyes, and he hurried rapidly away.

The first thing that the manager did after leaving the house was to make his way to Covent-garden, where he bought the freshest bouquet, and a basket of the finest fruit that could be procured, and sent them with a kind little note to the invalid.

He had not been in such a melting mood for many a long day, and the influence of it was felt at night when he presented himself at the theatre. He was mild and gentle to his underlings; never once swore at his carpenters or scene-shifters, nor abused the prompter and stage-manager, as was his custom. Nay, he even allowed an unfortunate *coryphée*, who lost her shoe in a most particular part of the ballet—causing a most decided titter in the front of the house—to escape without a word, although the mishap passed before his very eyes. His strange preoccupation was the cause of universal comment, till he told the story of Claudia's critical state, and then the wonder turned to an universal opinion that "the governor was down in the mouth about the loss it would be to him."

And so he was; but there was sorrow for the woman mingled with his feelings as a manager, for Mr. Golightly had a heart, although the ups and downs of a long managerial career had somewhat blunted its finer feelings.

Frank Vavasour held very little communication with Austin Bertram during those days of confusion and anxiety. That gentleman received the news of Lord Nortonshall's strange death with unfeigned astonishment. His first words were somewhat strange on hearing of the death of a friend.

"A blunder—a most clumsy blunder," was all his remark; "but whether on his lordship's part or no remains to be seen."

He was still more surprised when the story of Alma's supposed trance reached his ears; but he only shrugged his shoulders with a sneer, and said to himself—

"Bah! another phase of the same idiotic blunder. I know whose hand is in this; but I will have my revenge yet, for all her efforts."

Claudia kept her word to Lady Nortonshall, and kept Frank from disputing the wisdom of her decision.

"You will marry her, of course, some day," said Claudia; "and you will be thankful then that you have given the world no hold to speak lightly of her. Trust to time, my dear Frank; there is a long day of happiness before you yet."

And Frank was forced to be content with the knowledge that his darling was well, and safe from future persecution; but the days seemed long to him, and it was weary waiting, though Claudia fed him from time to time with such meagre comfort as loving messages could afford.

CHAPTER LVII.

THE INDIAN CABINET.

As Dr. Bleckton had told Claudia, there was an inquest on Lord Nortonshall, the result of which was a verdict of "Accidental Death," and the coroner took the opportunity of making some very severe remarks touching the reprehensible practice of people keeping deadly poisons in their houses—remarks which, if they could have restored the dead man to life, might have been of most essential service, but under the circumstances not worth the paper and expenditure of ink used to jot them down.

Of course there was a grand funeral, and a gathering together of all who could claim the remotest connection with the deceased nobleman; but there was no will to be found anywhere, and a distant cousin, who had never hoped to step into a peerage, succeeded to the title and estates, which the late lord's marriage had redeemed for his family.

Alma, of course, stepped into a handsome jointure, and the possession of the family jewels, as well as the country house. There were curious reports afloat concerning her re-appearance in the land of the living, but the authority of Sir James Jeffson had been sufficient to satisfy most people, and for the rest, Alma herself never heard.

The usual crowd of idlers assembled round the house on the day of the funeral, to watch the splendid array of mourning-coaches and empty chariots, and a white-robed clergyman read the solemn words of the burial service over the lordly clay, committing him "to the dust, in the sure and certain hope of a joyful resurrection." And so Graham, eighth Earl of Nortonshall, slept with his fathers, and Ernest, his cousin, reigned in his stead.

Mrs. Eversfield lost no time in removing her niece from the scene of her suffering. She had hastened from Paris, where she was staying, full of astonishment and curiosity at the strange things which had happened, and lost no time in taking Alma away. She was very kind to her now—perhaps the memory of the part she had taken in her unhappy marriage had its influence on the good lady's temper—and Alma was at least in peace in her house. She was very glad of it, for she required rest and quiet—a home away from the world which pitied her, when "poor Lady Nortonshall" was the theme of everybody's well-meant commiseration.

She had kept to her determination not to see Frank; but she had written him a letter, in which she explained her reasons, and bidding him be patient. Poor Alma! she felt, as she had told Claudia, almost guilty in her love for him. Patient! yes, he would be patient as long as she wished, now that the future had some light and hope in it, but he longed, how fervently only those who love and have suffered can tell, for the time to come when he might claim his early promised bride in the face of the world.

Austin Bertram was abroad. His health, he declared, wanted renovating, and he was wandering over the Continent in an apparently purposeless manner. Since Lord Nortonshall's death he had grown very moody and irritable, for his purposed revenge upon the two people whom he fancied had injured him was lost to him. Alma was alive and well, and the very means he had thought to be revenged on her by, were leading her to happiness; while Claudia Wynne, though ill, and at the point of death, was calmly content in the good-will and respect of all who knew her. Her failing was very gradual. The insidious disease which was sapping her young life had taken its slowest form, and there was no acute suffering to sadden the hearts of her friends with the sight of pain they were powerless to alleviate.

On Frank Vavasour, too, the sunshine of brighter days, which he was powerless to cloud, seemed to be shining brightly, and it maddened Bertram to see it. His intercourse with the young man fell off, till, when he went abroad, it had almost entirely ceased, save when they met by accident. Frank felt very suspicious and uncomfortable when he was with him, and it was quite a relief when his quondam associate went abroad.

Bertram called on Claudia before he went, but did not see her. Somehow she shrank from him, too, for his name recalled sad recollections to her, and she sent him her adieu by Dorothy. She was not so lonely as she thought to be, for many old friends gathered round her to cheer her solitude. Mr. Golightly had another star in his theatre now; indeed, two or three had flashed on his horizon since the brightest of them all had faded, but none who proved so attractive as Claudia Wynne. She was not forgotten by her old companions at the Elysium, and many of her former admirers were constant in their offers of service.

One gentleman, who, with his wife, had ever been steady friends, placed at her disposal for the summer months, their pretty marine villa in the Isle of Wight—a mark of attention as welcome as it was kind and serviceable, and thither they removed her as soon as the weather was favorable for her journey. But not the

mild sea air, nor the bright sunshine, nor any kindness that could be shown her, could arrest the progress of Claudia Wynne toward the threshold of the next world.

Not that she was unhappy—on the contrary, her heart was full of peace and content, and she was always ready with a smile when greeted by any of the loungers on the Parade, where her light wheeled-chair was always the centre of attraction whenever she appeared out of doors.

And so winter had passed away, and brightened into spring, which in its turn had blossomed into summer, and the first red tints of autumn lay upon the leaves, and still Claudia lived feebly on. Frank went from London several times to see her, and always found her the same happy, tranquil creature, though his heart was wrung on each succeeding visit to see the ravages which each succeeding week was making. To those about her it was not so perceptible; indeed, they thought her better. But she was not deceived, and as the summer waned away she began to yearn for home, for the dear house in Bayswater—dear to her from many a fond association, and she returned to town, with Frank for her companion.

"It is so good to be at home," she said, when they had carried her in and laid her upon the couch in the pretty little drawing-room. "I used to have such a dread of dying alone; and now see how many friends I muster—you the first amongst them."

"Don't talk of dying, Claudia—let me keep you while I can," Frank answered, sorrowfully. "I've not much left to care for in the world if I lose the best, the truest friend man ever had."

"You forget Alma," she answered, reproachfully. "Look at it as you will, you cannot alter Heaven's pleasure. But I will not speak of my death if it makes you so sad. Bring me that desk, and I will show you some of my treasures."

He crossed the room for the desk she had pointed out, and bringing it to her, they spent some time in turning over the varied contents. There were letters of flattering import to the successful actress from people of high standing in the world, trinkets and gifts from many a titled wooer, and stored away in a secret drawer which opened with a spring, a locket, containing a miniature of her mother.

There was something else, too, at the sight of which Claudia uttered an exclamation, a stud of curious workmanship—a quaint device on a ground of dark-blue enamel, and set in gold.

"I had forgotten this," she said.

"Whose is it?"

"Jasper Glosson's—the man I have so vainly striven to find. When he tried to murder my mother, she struggled with him, and clutching at his breast, that stud came out in her hand. She bade me keep it, and when I should find the other two, to lay my hand upon the owner as the man she had sworn to denounce to justice."

Frank took the trinket, and looked at it with a strange interest. Here was another trace of this man's existence—would he ever find the end of the clue?

"Will you give it me?" he asked

"Yes, you can keep it. But I don't think he will ever be found now. I believe he must be dead."

"Perhaps. By the way, Claudia, Austin Bertram returns next week. He has written to me to have his apartments put in order."

"Ah," she answered, listlessly. "But what made you think of him?"

"I hardly know, unless the connection of his name with this man's, which his illness made me acquainted with. I feel assured he knows something of him."

"Don't let us talk of him any more, Frank. I want to tell you something. I am going to write to—Alma."

"To Alma!"

"Yes, I want her to come back to England at once."

Her heart gave a sudden bound of pain at the sight of the joy which overspread his face at her words, but she concealed it, and said, smilingly—

"Are you not glad?"

"Glad!"

"You; would you not like to see her?"

"You know I should. But why is this, Claudia? Are you feeling worse? Surely you do not think that you are—"

"Dying? No, not yet, Frank. I am safe to last till the winter comes, I think; but I want to see her again before I leave this world, to talk to her while I am able to enjoy her society. I want to have her near me—near us, Frank—my brother, and see some of the happiness that I shall leave behind me when I die."

"But Alma will not meet me," he said, despondingly. "She fears what the world would say of her."

"She will forget all that in time. I hope to see you married, and I think she will not refuse if I ask her."

Frank was not so sure upon this point, however. Claudia's few words had raised a strange feeling at his heart, and he went away with the stud in his pocket, but thinking less of it, or the mysterious Jasper Glosson, than of Alma and the prospect of happiness before him.

Married to her before the death which seemed so awfully near now! He scarcely dared to hope it, and yet, his long love and their mutual suffering might plead with her for him, and he fell into a revery of a blissful future with the loved one of his boyhood and his youth.

Claudia lost no time in writing to Naples, where Alma and Mrs. Eversfield were staying, and a letter came to her by return of post to say that they would start for England immediately, for Mrs. Eversfield had contracted almost as great a regard for the actress as her niece had; and had even offered in the fulness of her gratitude to remain and nurse Claudia, if she would have allowed it.

Several days must necessarily elapse before Alma and her aunt could follow their letter, and during the interval Frank's thoughts received plenty of occupation from the occurrence of a curious circumstance. He had given the landlady, according to Austin Bertram's request, information of that gentleman's expected arrival, and the good woman had immediately set to work at giving his apartments what she called "a thorough good turn out," to attain which laudable and much-to-be-desired end carpets were taken up, curtains down, and the whole house thrown into that state of confusion which seems inseparable from such operations.

Frank Vavasour discovered that he was to be a victim to the cleaning mania, for his rooms were invaded ever and anon by the gaunt charwoman who had been called in to supplement the labors of the regular servant, while occasionally the worthy landlady herself would appear, to prefer a request that some article or other might be placed in his room for safety.

As a matter of course he could not refuse, but he began heartily to wish that there were no such things as brooms or housemaids in the world, when, one morning, while sitting at breakfast, he was startled by a loud crash in the rooms overhead, which were those preparing for Mr. Bertram, and immediately ensued a cry of lamentation and despair.

Presently the landlady appeared, her ruddy face set in lugubrious mould, and entreated his presence. He followed her up the stairs to find the whole household assembled, and the unfortunate charwoman seated in despair, and wringing her hands over the ruins of a small Indian cabinet, which she had contrived to throw down while moving it.

The doors were broken, and the contents forcing themselves out, and the landlady gazed at the wreck in horror.

"Whatever shall I do?" she exclaimed, piteously. "That cabinet that Mr. Bertram was always so particular about, and wouldn't let anybody touch but himself."

And then she turned upon the unfortunate cause of the mischief, who could only weep and wring her hands.

Frank came to the rescue, and examined the damaged article.

"Let me look at it," he said. "There may not be much harm done after all."

He stepped forward as he spoke, and stooped to pick up a small glittering object, which had apparently fallen from one of the opened drawers.

"Good gracious, Mr. Vavasour!" exclaimed the landlady; "whatever is the matter?"

For Frank had started as though stung by an adder, and was gazing with pale face and distended eyes upon what he had just picked up.

"At last! at last!" he muttered.

(To be continued in our next. Commenced in No. 9.)

MAB.

Nearly everybody in the quiet old cathedral town of Askerley was anxious to gain an *entrée* to Mrs. Archer's parties. No one else knew so well as she did how to choose her guests, how to amuse them, and how to leave on their minds that delightful impression of being appreciated which is so gratifying to the visitor; for she was one of those women who, without a trace of insincerity, please all their friends simply by the exercise of unobtrusive tact.

One lovely August evening the scene in Mrs. Archer's old-fashioned drawing-room would have refreshed the eyes of the most critical and fastidious looker-on; and Mr. Horace Deanes—who was certainly not a man easily pleased—appeared to think that Askerley society was not so very dull after all, and that his hasty conclusion that he should find his visit unendurable might be modified. Certainly those pretty girls, in their flowing muslin dresses, moving about the garden with that unconscious grace which is always so charming, listening to the whispered nothings that their admirers appeared to know only too well how to say, made a very pleasing picture. Then Mr. Deanes looked back into the softly-lighted room, where a slight brown-haired girl was singing that—to her—sweetest of songs, "Only," in a full rich voice.

Somehow, Mabel Scott, with her proud look and rather reserved manner, seemed to interest him more than any one he had seen for some time. Her face was one that would strike a stranger, not so much by its beauty as by the quick changes of expression which made it fascinating. She had a way, too, of looking at people as if she expected a good deal from them, which generally gratified them; but then came a provoking change of manner to indifference, as if they had disappointed her, which had on one or two occasions chilled the admiration which her beauty had inspired.

Horace went softly over and listened to the song.

"Is that one of your favorites, Miss Scott? I always wonder why young ladies are so fond of these melancholy ditties. Now, if I preferred that style of thing, there would be little cause for surprise. People who have lived unsatisfactory lives, and got tired of themselves and everybody else, might be supposed to indulge in sentimental regrets; but you have the world before you, and know nothing of trouble and weariness, and yet you are like the rest of your sex. You all sing as if you had some mysterious hidden trouble which it consoled you to pour forth in song."

"Now, Mr. Deanes," said Mab, looking up at him, laughingly, "I know you think that you have said something delightfully sarcastic, and yet not rude, and that I ought to feel what grand noble beings men are who have lived unsatisfactory lives and got tired of everything; but let me tell you that I'm not at all impressed, and not in the least ashamed of my songs. I dare say we poor despised women have more real troubles in our humdrum lives than you men in your travels and excitements and varied experience can have any idea of."

Mab had become excited, and her brown eyes were flashing gloriously—the charge of sentimentalism was always a tender point with her—but all the answer she received was a quiet little smile.

"Do you suppose that I have no longing to see the world," asked Mab, clasping two very pretty hands together—"that I'm not always wishing myself away from this sleepy, gossipy, old-maidish place, where one day is just like another, and nothing ever happens? I'll say no more—you're laughing at me!"

"Indeed I'm not; I was thinking that I would give a good deal to be so enthusiastic about anything."

At that moment Mrs. Archer came to carry Mab off to act in a charade, leaving Mr. Deanes wishing that he had known Mab ten years ago, and wondering what he had better say next to get another good look at those flashing eyes; indeed, he devoted himself so entirely to Mab for the rest of the evening that the pretty Miss Wilson, the Dean's daughter, began to think that her chances of captivating the new arrival were getting fewer every minute.

Mrs. Archer was alive enough as to what was going on around her, and in the weeks ensuing noticed that Horace always kept close to Mab Scott at all the picnics—for which Askerley was famous—that the pair always managed to have a great deal to say to each other, that a little later long silences often fell upon them, and yet that they never seemed to be dull or weary of each other. From these and many other circumstances Mrs. Archer drew her own conclusions, and was well pleased to think that her changeable, melancholy brother seemed in a fair way to settle down and end all his wanderings "in a nice, satisfactory manner, just like any one else," as she said, and just, too, when she was beginning to give up all hope of ever seeing her wishes realized.

And Horace? He had loved once in his life before seriously, besides having had several flirtations and platonic friendships, more or less lasting; but now, for the first time since Mary Lee's death—ten years ago—he began to find himself longing for a home and the love of a good woman, and making up his mind that the one woman in the world for him was Mab Scott, and that, if she would not love him, then no woman should fill her place as long as he lived.

As the weeks sped on Horace felt that his other loves were as shadows compared to this; but he let them pass without saying anything decisive—he had got to the age when a man is afraid to disturb a happy present, even for the sake of a happier future.

All these attentions of Horace's had not been unobserved by the young ladies of Askerley. The Dean's daughters did not arrange it, in so many words, between themselves, that they would do their best to alter the position of matters, but there was a tacit understanding to that effect.

One afternoon the three girls were walking in the Deanery garden, and, as Mab Scott was present, they deemed the time favorable for the commencement of their manœuvres.

"What a delightful man Mr. Deanes is!" began Laura. "There's a kind of charm about him that no one seems able to resist. I'm sure he could make me do anything he liked. But of course, Mab dear, you know more about his peculiarities than I do."

Jane, the pretty one, chimed in without giving Mab time to answer.

"It's a great pity—really a great pity—that he is such a flirt. No doubt all the stories about him can't be true"—and Jane shook her yellow hair, and looked pensive—"but I'm afraid it's quite true that a girl in Devonshire is breaking her heart for him. She thought he was in earnest, silly little thing, and he was only amusing himself, as usual. It's lucky for all of us that we are too sensible to be taken in by his fascinating ways."

Laura stole a glance at Mab, but she could not be certain whether these well-directed shafts had gone home. Mab laughed a little, and joined in Jane's congratulations as to the prudence of themselves and their friends, and was in all respects the same as usual, except that no one could induce her to sing during the evening; and, when Horace strolled in, hoping to escort her home, he found that Mr. Hawke, one of Mab's admirers, had been beforehand with him.

Poor Mab's feelings were somewhat painful that night; she said over and over again that she had been deceived, and was the laughing-stock of Askerley.

"I know those horrid girls meant more than they said, but they need not have thrown out their hints to me. I hate him, and every one shall see that I do; no one shall ever think that I'm breaking my heart for him! And yet I think he does like me. No; I hate him—I despise him—I wish that I may never see him again!"

And then she threw herself on her bed, and cried as only girls very much in love can cry, and fell asleep kissing the rose that Horace had given her the day before.

The next morning this easily-deceived young lady had a great debate with herself as to whether she would see Horace when he called, but finally decided that she would receive him as usual—that he should discover no change in her save in her manner. Horace very soon found out the change. There were no songs and no idling in the drawing-room for him that day; Mab had to go and see some poor people, and finish some work, and the soft light that had begun to burn so brightly in her brown eyes went out suddenly, and left her face hard and cold; while poor Horace puzzled himself as to the reason of this inexplicable change.

Day by day the breach seemed to widen between them, till Horace longed to provoke her to a quarrel, in the hope that the reconciliation might bring them together again; but Mab's indifference appeared to be too complete for him to hope for success in that rather dangerous venture. At last he determined to tell Mab that he loved her; and one evening toward the end of September he found his opportunity.

They were strolling by the river side, and he thought that he had never seen her look so lovely; the proud expression had given way to a softer one, and she seemed to have forgotten the coldness of the last few weeks. Horace bent down and hurriedly whispered—

"Mab, I love you! From the first day that I saw you I think I must have loved you; and I can never love any one else—never, never, Mab, as long as I live!"

He was holding her hands, and waiting impatiently for her response. For one minute Mab let him wait, a thrill of joy running through her heart. Unconsciously her head drooped till it nearly touched his arm; then she remembered the stories that she had heard, and drew away her hands, answering him with cold tones, but not daring to look up.

"You play your part well, Mr. Deanes—you are quite a master in the art of profession!"

He flushed red with anger and surprise.

"What do mean?" he exclaimed. "Can you tell me that you don't care for me, Mab? Were all those soft looks of yours only assumed? Can you doubt me? You must believe me, Mab! I tell you that I love you. You shall believe me! No man ever loved before as I love you."

Why could she not believe him? Her heart was telling her all the time that he spoke the truth, and that she was wilfully throwing away her happiness; but her pride would not let her give way. For one instant she faltered when she looked up and saw the bitter pain on his face; but then she thought to herself that it was simply dissimulation, and she said, slowly—

"I do not care for you, Mr. Deanes, and I cannot believe in your love for me."

"No one will ever love you half so well; and I trust no other man will ever waste his heart upon one so cold."

His voice was so harsh that she looked up startled, but he had turned away without a word of farewell, and left her standing by the stream. She watched him stride along the path till he had nearly reached the turning at the end; had he looked back, she might have called him to her, but he was too deeply wounded to yield in the slightest degree. That night Horace Deanes left Askerley.

* * * * *

Winter in Askerley was generally very enjoyable; plenty of good skating, with musical parties, and endless other amusements, made the time pass pleasantly enough, and no one was gayer and more ready to be pleased than Mab Scott. She would not own to herself that she might have made a mistake in respect of Horace Deane's love, or show that she repented of her wilfulness; but when her half sister, Conny Andrews, came home for awhile, Mab seemed to be glad to let her take her place in society, and was fertile in excuses for remaining quietly under the parental roof-tree.

Conny was a general favorite, and had a character for amiability which her family were apt to consider rather unmerited; certainly she possessed a talent for getting into the good graces of her friends. She was generally away on long visits to some of her father's relatives, and Mab and her mother found that the course of their lives ran more smoothly in her absence.

One day, while Conny was away from home again, Mab was returning from the cathedral in a very listless mood, when she met the old postman toiling up the hill to Mrs. Scott's house. He gave her a letter, and when she saw the handwriting on the envelope, she felt relieved that Conny was not with her. Hurriedly tearing it open, she read that Horace was unable to forget her, that he could not live without her, and that she must believe in his love. He was staying at a village eight miles from Askerley, and would give her a week to decide; meanwhile he implored her to think better of him and be assured of his truth.

Mab's first feeling was one of great joy to think that she had not lost him; surely she might believe him now. The rosy flush on her cheeks and the light in her eyes would have set Horace's mind at rest forever could he but have seen them.

How that week passed Mab could never exactly remember afterward. She took long, solitary walks, one day letting herself think of the happiness that was within her reach, and another remembering her old doubts, and deciding that she would never see Horace again. He had told her that he would wait for her decision a week, and she intended to write to him on the following Wednesday; but her pride would not let her keep to the day, and it was Friday afternoon before she left the house to post her answer. It was very short, only—"You may come over and see me."

The snow was deeper than ever and the wind keen and cutting when Mab started, but she cared nothing for the weather as she walked quickly along; so busy was she with her happy thoughts that she did not see Horace himself hurrying across the road to overtake her. He had waited patiently till the week was over, and then, when no answer came, had ridden over, determined to make her listen to him, and feeling aggrieved that she should treat him thus badly.

"Mab, I have come for my answer," he said, as soon as he had reached her side; "I have waited the time—why do you treat me so? A stranger is worthy of as much courtesy as I have asked from you. Perhaps you did not mean to notice me at all?"

All Mab's newly-acquired softness and gentleness and faith fled when she saw the subject of her thoughts before her, and with the letter in her pocket that he would have given worlds to see, she looked him straight in the face and said—

"Your answer is, 'No.'"

"Mab, you can't be so cruel—you cannot mean it. All these months I have tried to forget you, but it is of no use: day and night I have thought of you, and I did hope that you might have missed me, that you were not quite indifferent to me. Now you merely tell me that your answer is, 'No—no!'" Then a sudden thought seemed to strike him. "Perhaps you care for somebody else?"

She never knew what prompted her to stoop to an untruth, but she said—

"Yes—I shall be married shortly."

"In that case I will trouble you no more;" and he bowed coldly and turned away.

For a moment Mab stood rooted to the spot, then she hastened after him.

"I have come to tell you that I have deceived you—I care for nobody, and no one will ever love me as well as you do."

He only said very gravely—

"I am sorry that you should dislike me so much that you are obliged to have recourse to an untruth to rid yourself of my presence. I go abroad to-morrow—you need not fear that I shall annoy you any more."

He waited a minute to see if even then she would relent; but, though she was longing to cry out, "Horace, I love you—forgive me!" the minute passed, and she said nothing. He moved away; and this time Mab knew that there would be no coming back—she had thrown away his love forever. The excitement and the cold told upon her never very strong frame, and, in the months of illness that followed, Mab had plenty of time to repent now that it was too late.

* * * * *

With her recovery from severe bodily illness, Mab, now that Horace had left her forever, knew that he was more than all the world to her, and that in losing him she had lost everything. Mrs. Scott fortunately was not a woman of much penetration, and had not discovered her daughter's wretched little history; nor did Mab tell her. "What was the use?" she thought As to Conny, there was never much confidence between the two girls; and Mab knew that she must expect no sympathy from her for such foolish conduct, and so she kept her secret to herself.

Nearly a year after Mab's illness, when Mrs. Scott and her daughter were staying at the seaside, and Mab was trying to persuade herself that she was forgetting Horace, a letter from Conny very quickly undeceived her.

"I'm having great fun," Conny wrote—"the most intense enjoyment. There are delightful people here; but by a long way the nicest person is a Mr. Deanes. He is rich, handsome, and looks as if he had gone through a great deal—which is my style, you know, Mab—and he has as good as proposed to me. I need not say what my answer will be. All the girls here are wild because I have cut them out. I'm doing the gentle and childish, and I find that it takes. I've no doubt but that in my next letter I shall have some news to tell you."

Mab started up, her face aflame.

"Cruel, cruel! He need not have chosen her. Oh, how can I bear it! Oh, Horace, my dear, my own, she will not love you; she only cares for your money! It's all my own fault—all my own fault!" And for hours she sat moaning and crying that she loved him, that he was hers, and that Conny should not take him from her.

Conny did not know that Mr. Deanes knew her sister; she was frequently away from home, and there was so little sympathy between the girls that when she was at Askerley any confidences that passed were merely accounts of Conny's numerous flirtations. Poor Mab! This was indeed the last bitter drop in her cup. She could not go away; she must stay and see Horace make love to Conny before her very eyes, and she must pretend that she was indifferent—that he was no more than a stranger to her.

Soon after Conny came down to St. Ives—the seaside resort at which the Scotts were stopping—lighting up the quiet house with her gayety.

"Mab," she remarked one day, "Horace is the dearest fellow—rather quiet, but so fond of me. To tell you the truth, I rather liked Captain Jameson—the man that's been spooney on me so long, you know," and Conny smiled prettily; "but he was good for nothing more than a flirtation, and when Horace appeared, and made advances to me, I threw poor Harry Jameson over, and—well, I met Horace half-way."

"No doubt," said Mab, dryly.

"I wonder what he'll think of you, you white little thing! My goodness, Mab, now that I look at you, you're rather gone off! But what on earth can you have to disturb you in that sleepy Askerley? If you went through half what I do—up night after night until all hours, with the wear and tear of half a-dozen flirtations on hand at once, and knowing that you must make a decent match, and that time is getting short—you might well look ill. I often wonder that my hair has not turned gray with all my cares—which reminds me that my gray hat is not becoming, and that I must do it up instantly."

"What a wretched, small hearted thing you are!" broke out poor Mab.

"Very likely; but my investments pay better than yours, my child; so I don't think I'll take the trouble to change them now."

"How can you sit there thinking of nothing but your wretched dresses, when you ought to be so happy? Oh, Conny, make him a good wife!" and the brown eyes filled with bitter tears.

Conny put down her work, and looked round at her sister.

"What do you mean? What ever has come to you? Mab, what is it?"

"Oh, nothing—nothing! I only hope you'll be happy."

"Then why on earth are you sitting there crying your eyes out? Of course I shall be happy—I always am when I have my own way, and I am going to have it now. Mab, my child, confide in your prudent and extremely clever elder sister. Are you in love? Poor little thing, is she crying for her lover, and won't he come to her? Or what is it?"

Mab said nothing; she was doing all that she could to check those sobs which were so unusual with her, and to speak then would have been impossible. She held her hands tighter over her eyes, and thought what an utterly foolish girl she was—she would hide it all from Conny; and she looked up with her face drawn and white.

"There's nothing the matter with me, Conny, save that I feel a little melancholy to-day."

Conny, who was a young person of discrimination, smiled, and said, "Oh!"

"Don't ask me any questions, dear," remarked Mab. "My troubles are all over, and all the talking in the world won't set them right. By the by, I know Mr. Deanes—he was at Askerley last winter, staying with Mrs. Archer. Has he ever mentioned me? Does he know that you are my sister?"

Mab tried very hard to put her questions in a most unconcerned tone of voice, but could not help betraying herself. Conny came straight over to her, and took her by the shoulders.

"Now, then, Mab, look me in the face and answer—do you love Horace Deanes? No? Do you think that you can deceive me in that way? Is this the cause of your looking so ill, and of the change in you? Now tell me the whole story, from beginning to end, and don't attempt to keep one single bit back."

"Conny, it's nothing now—it's all over. Let me go away and hide from him and from everbody. Do you think that I would be so wicked as to spoil your life? It's all my own fault. I'll never tell you—never!"

"Very well, then, he shall."

The threat was too much for poor Mab, and with white, trembling lips she told the story of her wilfulness and pride and her punishment. Not a word did her sister say till she had finished, and then Conny shook her head thoughtfully.

"My child, I won't say that I'm not sorry, because that would be a story. I will just observe that I'm rather unlucky, and that it is annoying, when one has made an end of matrimonial worries, to discover that one has caught somebody else's property after all. But, thank goodness, those spiteful Wilsons don't know anything about it; you shall have your Horace, Mab, and I'll do the self-sacrificing elder sister, and give you both my blessing."

"Are you mad, Conny? Do you think that I will interfere between you and Horace? No; he's yours now, and if you say another word, I'll go straight off to Aunt Lucy's, and not come back till you're safely married."

"Now look here, Mab. I don't pretend to be an angel, and I don't mean to say that I'm not sorry and disappointed, or anything else you like; but, if you think that I'm mean enough to take that man from you and wreck your life, you're mistaken. In any case, when I do decide upon marriage, I should prefer to know that I have all my future husband's love; and, in fact, my mind is made up—and you know from experience what that means—so don't let me have any more nonsense, and brighten up a little, for I shouldn't be surprised if the adored one appeared to-morrow."

Mab wound her arms round her sister.

"Conny, darling, you are generous. Oh, I never loved you half enough, or knew how good you were! But do you think that I will beg to him, or ask him for his love? I would die sooner!"

"Possibly, you foolish young thing! However, I must leave you, to manage my own affairs," and Conny hastened out of the room, ran into the garden, and had a "good cry." Presently she returned to the house, revolving various plots and schemes in her head; and, when Mab appeared in the drawing-room shortly afterward, she found her sister, sitting at her little work-table, as bright as ever.

For two days the girls waited for Horace, spending the time in learning to know and appreciate each other as they had never done before. Mab, to restrain her feeling of happiness, tried to think that he must have changed, and conjured up pictures of his coming and looking coldly at her; then she shuddered to think that they might "come true," as the children say, and altogether was so irrational and changeable that her family were greatly relieved when they saw Mr. Deanes turn the corner of the little esplanade.

"He's coming!" Conny called out softly—which Mab had no sooner heard than she ran up-stairs to her room, locked the door, and fell to wishing that he was far away.

Mrs. Scott discreetly retired, and left poor Conny to receive her quondam lover. He was very little altered—only a shade graver than he used to be at Askerley. A very tender kiss he gave to the girl waiting by the fireplace; but, being only fond of her, and not in the least in love with her, he did not notice that she shrank slightly from him.

"Well, darling, are you glad to see me?"

"Very glad. But, Horace, I have something to say to you. Don't stop me till I've finished."

"Won't it keep, little one? I'm so tired, and I haven't had a good look at the little woman who belongs to me."

"Suppose that she didn't belong to you. Suppose that it was all a mistake. Would you be sorry—very sorry, Horace?"

Try as she might, Conny could not resist saying that much. Till she was going to lose him she did not realise that she liked this man for himself, and not only for his riches; but she repented directly afterward, and stopped the words that he would have said.

"No; sit down, and I will come beside you and tell you something that you must hear at once."

He leaned back on the chair that she gave him, and began to toy with Conny's curls, while she told him her story, watching his face all the time. When she came to Mab's name he started up.

"She your sister, and I never knew it! I thought you were simply cousins. Oh, Mab, my pretty Mab, my proud darling! Conny, I have wronged you deeply—I dare not ask your forgiveness. But, little one, though I knew that I did not really love you, you were very dear to me; moreover, I was lonely, and I never knew that she loved me." Here Horace paused—what more could he say?

"Horace, listen to me, and don't sit there looking as if you had lost everything in the world. I'll try to bear up under my severe loss! I've no doubt that I shall soon console myself. There, I'm not angry now! You are going to be my brother, and we shall all be happy. Do you think there is any one that you would like to see to-night; or would you rather wait till to-morrow? Kiss me, Horace, and may you be happy, dear!" and without giving him time to answer Conny left the room.

Mab, by a very simple stratagem, was led to enter the room in which Horace was seated, and soon began reproaching herself—"It was all her pride and wickedness—how did she ever deserve that he should love her still?—until Horace closed her lips with kisses. When Conny returned, their conversation had grown to be almost childish, and she had to reprove them, saying severely that they were old enough to know better; mentally, however she decided that she would write to Captain Jameson, and tell him that, if he liked to come down to St. Ives, she would reconsider her refusal of him—her reason for which was doubtless due to the conduct of Mab and her lover; for, as she told them, "Nothing is so annoying as to see two people so idiotically happy as you both are;" adding, by way of tonic, "but there's one comfort, it won't last!" at which Horace turned to Mab, whispering for the thousandth time, "You will never cease to love me, Mab."

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A son of Mr. J. H. MEEKER, of Chatham Four Corners, N. Y., has been cured of Consumption by Dr. Pierce's Golden Medical Discovery—so says Mr. C. B. Caufield, editor of the *Chatham Courier*.

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nov8-tf

THE
SATURDAY EVENING POST.

PHILADELPHIA, SATURDAY, JAN. 24, 1874.

TERMS---Always in Advance.

Single copy, $3.00 a year, payable in advance, not including postage, which is twenty cents a year, and payable at the office where the paper is received. Every yearly subscriber will be entitled to a copy of our Premium Chromo, or to either of our large and beautiful Premium Steel Engravings—"The Sisters," "The Song of Home at Sea," or "Washington at Mount Vernon."

One copy of THE POST ($3.00) and one of T. S. ARTHUR'S HOME MAGAZINE ($2.50) will be sent for $4.50. Each publication will send one of its Premium pictures, at the choice of the subscriber, the same as if each was separately subscribed for.

☞ Ten cents must always be remitted to pay the expense of mailing the Chromo or engraving. Or 25 cents, if the Chromo is desired mounted on cardboard. We strongly advise having the Chromo mounted—it greatly increases its value.

☞ Subscribers in British North America must remit *twenty cents extra*, as we have to prepay the U. S. postage.

☞ Remittances should be made, if possible, in Post-office Orders, or in Drafts or Checks, *payable to the order of the Saturday Post Publishing Company.*

BE CAREFUL IN OPENING THE WRAPPERS OF THE CHROMO OR ENGRAVINGS. Our subscribers are enjoined to be very careful in opening the wrappers of the Chromo or Engravings when they are received lest they should injure them.

Address
SATURDAY EVENING POST,
No. 319 Walnut Street, Philadelphia.

"One of Life's Happy Hours!"

SUCCESS OF OUR NEW CHROMO!

We are every day receiving the most gratifying letters concerning our new Chromo, "One of Life's Happy Hours." From all sides come spontaneous praises of its tender sentiment and rich and beautiful coloring, and we think there is hardly a household in the land which would not rejoice to have the picture brightening its walls. Some of the extracts from letters received by us, we cannot refrain from giving to our readers, and one of our talented lady writers sends us this sweet poem, which we publish with great pleasure:

ONE OF LIFE'S HAPPY HOURS.

Only a picture, colored by an artist,
Yet strangely sweet and full of subtle grace,
Suggestive of the love and strong emotion,
The tender care and ever true devotion
That find in every happy home a place.

A mother, with her loving eyes uplifted
To the rare treasure circled by her arm,
Glad, hopeful glance, yet full of wistful longing,
As though up to the throne her prayers were thronging
That God would keep her boy from every harm.

And he, the chubby, winsome, smiling darling,
Eyes downcast, gazing on a lily fair,
Himself a lovely human rosebud blooming,
With Heaven's light his baby brow illuming,
And Heaven's glory on his golden hair!

Sweet picture! hailed by many happy mothers,
Who with a babe's soft, clinging arms are bound;
What bliss e'er pure in all the wide creation?
They envy not a queen her coronation,
While they by dainty hands are flower-crowned.

Sad picture, too, for mothers oft bereaven,
Who felt the little clinging arms unfold
And slip away, while from the upward winging
Nothing is left but memory bells a-ringing,
And a clay image laid beneath the mould.

"One of life's happy hours!" Ah! yes, most happy;
A blessed season caught from Eden bowers,
Where in the light unfading and unending,
The songs of praise forever more are blending,
And all the minutes round to happy hours.

SADIE BEATTY.

Another lady writes as follows:—

"Your Premium Chromo is splendid, like a rich oil painting. How it will light up my room when I get it hung on the wall in the fancy frame it will be so easy to make! I like the bright dress and the gay flowers. A wreath of ivy will look pretty trailing over the frame and hanging down upon the pillar to the right of the picture, as it grows, for ivy will grow nicely in a glass bottle hung behind out of sight. Truly it is 'One of Life's Happy Hours,' and that mother and child look as if they had plenty more of the same sort; as if the sunny places and the sunny hours were theirs by right. Such a handsome, blooming, dark-eyed woman, and such a chubby little yellow-haired mischief of a boy—sticking flowers where they won't stay at all, but roll down upon his bare toes at the first motion. It cannot be very agreeable to be mussed and clutched in that way, but what does the happy mother care how much he tumbles her pretty brown hair, or pricks her forehead with the rose he is holding? The little round arms are so soft, and the tender touch of his baby fingers 'dressing mamma' go to her heart, I know, or she would not look so sweet and glad and serene under the infliction. A thousand thanks, Mr. Post, for this beautiful mother and spicy little rogue of a child. They will give me many a happy hour. By the way, that pink water-lily in the child's hand is not a fancy of the painter. There are pink water-lilies, do you know? but they are rare."

Mrs. Olive King, our graceful and witty New York correspondent, writes us:—

"It is the finest picture issued this year. It represents to the life, perfect happiness and contentment. The face of the mother is not surpassed in beauty by any of the Madonnas of the Old Masters. I shall have it framed and hung up where I can look at it often."

Miss Anne L. Forcelle, whose charming sketches have been so much admired, says:

"The picture is indeed 'very pretty,' as you say. I think it is *more* than that. The attitude of the mother is extremely natural and graceful, and the dear little fellow seems lovingly intent upon her adornment."

Mrs. J. G. A., of Newtown, Md., says:—

"I have received the Chromo, 'One of Life's Happy Hours,' and am very much pleased with it."

Mrs. M. K. Williams, of Mystic, Connecticut, says:—

"I must say the Chromo *far exceeds my expectation*. The engraving 'One of Life's Happy Hours,' was very popular, but I think the Chromo will be judged by most people to exceed in beauty anything you have offered before. Please to send to the following names."

Mr. T. J. Chambers, in a recent letter, says:—

"The Chromo is indeed a gem, and every lover of the beautiful should possess a copy."

Mr. D. O., of Chazy, Clinton county, N. Y., says:—

"My parlors are hung with your Premiums, and the prettiest of all is the Chromo of 'One of Life's Happy Hours,' just received."

Mr. J. H. H., of New Cambria, Mo., says:—

"My Chromo came to hand last night, in good order, and gives me entire satisfaction. *It is a beautiful thing.*"

Mr. M. H. J., of Fairfield, Indiana, says:—

"I think the Chromo, 'One of Life's Happy Hours,' is just splendid, and so does every one that I have shown it to. *It is the best Premium Chromo I have seen offered by any publication.*"

CITY FASHIONS.

A little talk with a first-class dressmaker in active business is the surest way of ascertaining the fashions actually prevailing in her department. To be announced, from however high authority, is not sufficient; that it is accepted, and by whom, is what establishes a style. A curious, intangible, yet very certain thing is this "latest mode," that every lady wants to be sure of in making up new dresses. The arbiter in such matters hardly knows how she arrives at her conclusions; but she does know positively how the garment in hand should be shaped, and what little novel touches will give it the air of the last thing out. To take the first rank in any line of art, one must have a genius for it, the art of making clothes not excepted. Genius is the magnet that draws to its centre from every quarter all needful information. You will find the artiste in dress taking all the best publications in her line, abroad and at home, thus keeping booked up as to the letter of the law; while for its successful application, she is wide awake, and has deft executive faculties.

It was for want of this special gift that Miss Bungle, who is painstaking enough, spoiled your last pretty silk, that you have been altering here, there and everywhere, with infinite chagrin and small success; for the first cut settles the character of a dress. It is apparently fashionable, but she did not know that double-breasted redingotes are *passé*, nor that there is a more tasteful way of putting on the upright silk ruche at the neck, nor that those flat pleats in the back at the waist would give a flat look, especially undesirable now that tournures are going out, and the change should be gracefully gradual. Then it is only the first-class dressmaker who can fit without pinching you. For those who make their own dresses it is a good plan to employ a professional once in a while, the best obtainable; and then rip up the worn-out waist and keep it for a pattern. There are little modern changes such as shortening the shoulder seam, that make a great difference in comfort. One could hardly stoop to put on an overshoe in a dress of five or six years ago, though considered an easy fit, because the long shoulder seam pinioned the arm. There is a growing tendency to consult comfort and physiological law; so that the latest ways of doing things are well worth knowing, even by those who care little for fashion. The sewing-machine will do almost everything, but it is found that the bias breadths of a cashmere skirt, for instance, hang better if run by hand.

The redingote has so much to recommend it that it is more worn than any other style; even silk dresses for home and evening wear are so made, and a sash, tied on one side, is added if desired. When basques are preferred they are quite long, to make up for the absent overskirt; and a deep, scant flounce on the underskirt is better than pleatings, as it adds little to the weight. The bias fold and thick cord that edges the redingote is used as a heading for the flounce, forming a simple and elegant trimming. There is a new way of working the large button-holes; they are bound with a narrow bias strip of the dress material, not worked with button-hole stitch. It looks very neat. Only two or three are needed for a redingote. The buttons below the waist are set on simply for ornament.

Some people always take up the fag end of a fashion making its exit. Nothing is more conspicuous just now than the extravagantly bouffant style that prevailed not long ago. It is inexcusable to be behind the times in such matters. When an absurd fashion has got its *congé*, by all means speed it out of sight. Many are leaving off hoops because they can make a better appearance without. The very nicest way of securing warmth without weight, is to wear a down-wadded petticoat. People in the country can sometimes make for themselves this luxury without the great expense which is the general objection.

Muffs of the same material as the jacket, velvet or beaver, are very much worn this winter. They are easily made at home, if there is a well-made one to copy from. The outside piece, and the inner one to which the wadding is tacked, and the silk lining, are all cut exactly alike,—straight oblong pieces. Some thick cord where the silk lining meets the velvet, and some good strong elastic are all that is needed, unless the muff is trimmed with fur to match the jacket.

A kind of veils, called beautifiers, because they are so becoming, are in favor at present,—white with black spots; and for the same reason, chenille-worked ruches, which can be bought for 44 cents a ruche. These are worn inside the pleating at the neck with which dresses are generally made. Cuffs of navy blue Chambery are among the novelties; and dressy ladies who have a *penchant* for colors, are seen sporting pocket handkerchiefs of oriental richness, gorgeously and deeply embroidered, with only a little bit of white cambric in the centre.

A very desirable article for winter comfort, and one much used by ladies this season, is a pair of leggings such as are worn by children. Made of cloth or velvet, with linen or fleecy lining, nicely fitted and buttoned down over the shoe-top, with elastic under the instep, they are a complete protection from cold and wet. The price, on Chestnut street, is from five to ten dollars, according to length. A skilful hand could make them at home, with a good pattern, for the neat fit is all-important. Waterproof cloth might be used, but it gets shabby sooner than cloth or velvet.

S. P.

From the Norristown "Daily Herald," Dec. 27, 1873:—

"'One of Life's Happy Hours" is the title of the premium chromo now being issued by the *Saturday Evening Post* to all their yearly subscribers. In richness of color and artistic execution, it is ahead of anything in that line we have yet seen, and could not be had at a picture store for less than the subscription price of the paper. The *Post* is one of the largest and best literary weeklies published, and only its large circulation enables the publishers to give a copy of this chromo to every subscriber.

Mrs. E. E. A., San José, California, writes:

"Please accept my hearty thanks for the beautiful Chromo, 'One of Life's Happy Hours'—truly named, as every mother will say. Those hours of innocence and joy come but once in a child's lifetime. I received the picture Christmas, and so it is a veritable Christmas gift. With your very valuable and interesting paper, and such charming Chromos, it is no wonder that you have so many subscribers. I have hung it over my writing-table, and when tired it will refresh me to gaze on such a beautiful picture."

E. C., Santa Cruz, Ca., says:—

"I send you this year eight subscribers. We have not missed a single number this year, and are just as well pleased with the paper as ever. We take six different papers, and consider THE POST the *best* as well as the *cheapest* of them."

GOOD-BYE.

I.

Ah yes, sweet love, look out, look up,
It is the dreary air of morn,
Too chill for the dress thou hast worn
For lighted rooms, and dance, and cup.
It is the star which leads the day,
It is the day low in the east,
O darling, I can never say
Those words to thee and then have ceased,—
Good-bye, good-bye!

II.

A light is dim within thy room,
Its air is sweet and warm with thee,
Why came we out here where the sea
Can break our hearts with that dread boom?
Thy face is pale that leans on me,
Lifted against the morning star;
Thy white arms hold me tremblingly
From speech which bears me from them far,
Good-bye, good-bye!

III.

A wind comes inland through the dark,
Damp, chill, from off the tossing waves;
From watery lengths 'neath which the graves
Of men are made, and have no mark.
Thy arms draw tighter round my neck,
I kiss thy face that lifts to me,
Thy lips that quiver, dreaming wreck,
Good-bye, my own, God cherish thee,
Good-bye, good-bye!

A. P.

THE BIBLE:

Illustrated by Oriental Usages.

BY MRS. FANNIE R. FEUDGE.

No. 36—BEDS.

"Bring him up to me in the bed, that I may slay him," was the requisition of King Saul, on receiving Michal's message through his servants, that David was sick, and therefore unable to answer his summons.

"Bring him up in the bed" sounds strangely enough to us; but it must be remembered that the beds commonly used in the East, then as now, were merely two padded quilts—one doubled for a mattress, and the other put on single for a covering. No more convenient mode of transporting a sick person could in those days be found, than to wrap him in his bed, and bear him away, without even the fatigue attendant on a change of couches. Indeed, this is the ordinary way all over the East, of conveying the sick from one place to another, whenever circumstances require removal; and none who are at all familiar with Oriental life, will fail to recall instances of seeing the sick, the feeble and the aged, thus transported from point to point. This serves too, to explain how it happened that the sick were so often brought to our Lord in their beds to be healed, and how one who had been just restored, might "arise, take up his bed," and return to his house. In most parts of the East, chairs are utterly unknown, or where introduced by foreigners, are little prized by the natives. As a substitute, *divans*, divans, or sofas are in general use; and upon these, Orientals sit or recline by day, and very many sleep at night, while almost all take the usual afternoon siesta upon them. This *divan* or divan is a portion of the room raised considerably above the floor of the rest of the apartment, and covered often with the costliest carpets, upon which are spread, in summer, fine, soft matting, and always luxurious cushions, with bolsters and pillows for leaning against and propping the elbows. The corner being the easiest, is regarded as the post of honor—the most voluptuous, indulging station, and for that reason assigned to the personages of highest rank. Hence the allusion, in Amos iii. 12, to the effeminate, self-indulgent Israelites, of whom the prophet says: "So shall the children of Israel be taken out, that dwell in Samaria, in the corner of a bed." For the night's repose and for the sick, the cotton quilts before spoken of, are spread upon the carpeted and cushioned divan, making a bed by no means contemptible, even with our preconceived ideas of "snowy bed linen," with its dainty ruffles and delicate embroideries. These divan beds serve to explain the real position of Jacob, when Joseph bringing in his two sons, the dying patriarch "strengthened himself and sat upon the bed," or divan, and when the blessings had all been pronounced, he "gathered up his feet into the bed"—i. e. drew them upward on the divan.

To the same sort of bed the royal Psalmist may have alluded in Ps. vi. 6, where he says, figuratively: "I make my bed to swim, I water my couch with my tears," thus in the abandon of grief, wetting with his tears, first the mattress upon which he reclined, while they ran over upon other portions of the divan. Such an understanding of Oriental beds may serve also to explain the passage in Esther vii. 8, where Haman is first portrayed as standing up "to make request for his life," and subsequently as "fallen upon the bed whereon Esther was." This was unquestionably the divan upon which Queen Esther sat or reclined, in "the place of the banquet of wine," to which she had invited Haman with her royal spouse, and not by any means what an occidental reader would understand by a "bed."

It was doubtless on such a bed that King Saul slept in his expedition against David, when the latter forebore to put forth his "hand against the Lord's anointed," but bore away the spear and cruse of water, as the tokens that were to convince his regal foe, how completely he had been in the power of the man he was plotting to destroy. I. Sam. xxvi. 7.

The words translated in our version "bolster," mean rather, "at his head;" and at even a much later period than the days of Saul, the use of such articles was regarded as too effeminate for a man, especially a military chieftain in the field, at the head of his army, to indulge in. Sir Walter Scott, in a note to his "Lady of the Lake," relates that Sir Ewen Cameron of Lochiel, when past seventy, being surprised by night, on a hunting-expedition, "wrapped his plaid about his sturdy form, and lay down contentedly upon the snow." Suddenly, however, the wrath of the old chieftain was aroused, by seeing his grandson had rolled a large snow-ball and formed thereof an impromptu pillow. Kicking the frozen pillow from under the head it supported, the ancient lord exclaimed: "Out upon thee! Art thou so effeminate as to need a pillow?"

But though divans are the ordinary beds of the East, they are by no means the only ones; nor are all divans as simply furnished as those described above. In Prov. vii. 16, the base woman is delineated as boasting of the "brocade" and "tapestry-work" with which she had "bedecked" her bed; and in Ezek. xiii. 18, as sewing "pillows to all arm-holes," and embroidering "luxurious cushions for all elbows"—i. e. pillows and cushions soft and flexible enough to suit all leaning arms—not carried about the person, as the words seem to imply. Of these descriptions, one is constantly reminded in the East, by the varied form and size of the numberless pillows and cushions laid about a nobleman's divan, especially within the precincts of their luxurious harems. Baron du Tott speaks of a divan-bed upon which he was invited to sleep, composed of "fifteen mattresses of quilted cotton, placed one upon another, and covered by a sheet of Indian linen sewed on the last mattress, with a counterpane of green satin adorned with gold embroidered in embossed work. Two large pillows of crimson satin, covered with the like embroidery, in which was no want of gold or spangles," were supported by two sofa cushions "brought near to serve for a back, but there was neither bedstead nor curtains." Very sumptuous to look at, no doubt; but scores of times while in the East, I have turned from these gorgeous piles of jewelled cushions, upon which "uneasy lies the head"—crown or no crown—to long for our own simple pillows encased in soft, cool linen, and sheets fresh and fragrant from the laundry, though guiltless of embroidery and seed pearls. Where this very elaborate display of cushions and mattresses is made for the night, the larger proportion are removed during the day, leaving only such as are required for sitting or reclining upon the divan, while the occupants are engaged in their ordinary avocations. In every palace or house of note, there is what is called "the bed-room"—not a sleeping apartment, but a spacious repository or store-room for the bestowal of superfluous mattresses, cushions, and bedding in general. In such a bed-room "in the house of the Lord," among its piles of wares, the infant Joash and his nurse might well be hidden, for even so long a period as six years, under the fostering care of the High Priest Jehoiada and his faithful wife, though such a course would be scarcely possible in an ordinary sleeping apartment.

Bedsteads proper are not, however, wholly unknown in the East, though somewhat peculiar in construction. They consist of merely a platform raised by posts, two or three feet above the ground—in other words of low stools, some six feet long, by two or three broad. The material, ordinarily wood, varies according to the wealth and taste of the owner—being sometimes ivory, as the "ivory beds" of Amos (ch. vi. 11.); sometimes iron, as the huge structure that supported the weight of the giant Og (Deut. iii. 11.); and occasionally of more costly metals, like "the beds (or couches) of gold and silver" in use at the Persian court, in the days of Queen Esther. (Est. i. 6). Alexander found the coffin of the great Cyrus deposited on a golden bedstead; and the use of such bedsteads was one of the perquisites of royalty among the Parthian rulers of Persia. Both Herodotus and Diodorus Siculus mention "beds of silver and gold" found in the temples; whilst Livy and St. Augustine speak of the "beds of gold and brass," brought by the Romans from Asia, after their conquests in the East. So metal bedsteads are not, after all, a modern invention; and old King Solomon was right, "There is no new thing under the sun."

Biographical Sketches.

GERARD, THE LION-SLAYER.

BY MAURICE F. EGAN.

Jules Gerard, who well deserved the epithet, "Lion-slayer," with which his name is always mentioned, was born at Pignan, France, in the year 1817. Even in his boyhood, he showed a decided inclination toward a life of warfare. He wanted to be a soldier, but his parents opposed his wish. "When a taste for a profession is strongly marked," he says, "there is no alternative, the boy becomes eminent in that career or none." For a time Gerard followed the path pointed out by his parents; at last, however, he gained his point. In 1842 he joined the French army in Algeria as a volunteer.

His regiment was stationed at Bone. As the Arabs around this place had submitted to French authority, the soldiers had little to do but kill time—a process which gave them more trouble than the killing of more tangible adversaries. Gerard's temperament was active and restless. Having slaughtered much of the small game that abounded in the vicinity, he sighed for a foe more worthy of his lead. He eagerly stepped forward to volunteer to serve at Guelma, an advanced post in the north. Here his bravery and coolness made him conspicuous. He enjoyed the honor of being twice mentioned in the military despatches.

After war, again came peace, which to Gerard meant enforced idleness and ennui. News reached him that an enormous lion was decimating the herds of the Arabs around Archious. Not only cattle became the victims of this king of beasts, but men were torn to pieces, and many horrible tales were related by those whose relatives had perished beneath the claws of the monster.

The Arabs are fatalists. When any event, either unfortunate or fortunate, occurs to an Arab, he murmurs "*mectoub*," it was written, and submits to his fate. He would rather let the lion take all he possessed than attack the animal himself. This is not true of all the Arabs, but it was of those among whom Gerard was sojourning.

The brave Frenchman heard the complaints of the Arabs, and resolved to rid the land of the devouring pest. The Arabs heard of his determination in scorn and derision. His frame was slight and delicate, and judging from his exterior, he seemed indeed an unequal match for the peerless rover of the plain and forest. Gerard listened unmoved to the taunts and jeers of the Arabs. "My heart leaped with joy," he says in his narrative, "at the thought that soon this all-powerful Seignor, the terror of the country, might bite the dust under the ball of a 'Christian dog,' and I enjoyed in anticipation the triumph of the feeble over the strong, and the power that would turn the Arab scorn and hatred into love and admiration."

Gerard made his preparations for his perilous undertaking, and having obtained permission of the officer in command, he set out to hunt the lion.

While on this expedition he learned much about the manners and customs of that nomadic race, the Arab. He remained for a time in one of their encampments. He relates a curious scene which occurred in the tent of Bon-Aziz, the Arab whose valuable mare had been devoured by the lion. Bon-Aziz was about to accompany Gerard on the lion hunt.

"At the moment when he was taking out his gun from its cover in his tent, seated quietly by my side, one of his wives bounded like a panther out of that portion of the tent reserved for females into the place where we were seated, and before the husband could comprehend the reason of this act, so contrary to all Arab ideas of propriety, she had snatched the gun from his hands, and had escaped into her own apartment.

"Bon-Aziz then lifted the curtain that separated the two apartments, and passed into his wife's chamber. I now heard a very animated discussion between the two. The husband wanted his gun, but the lady remained firm, saying, 'You are mad, let this dog of a Christian give himself as food to the lion, since he has not father nor mother nor wife nor children; but you shall not go.'

"'Therefore, because he is childless ought he to revenge me the loss of my beautiful mare?'

"'Oh, this beautiful mare!' cried several shrill voices at once, 'oh, you ought to be revenged for its loss, since you loved it more than us or your children, and since you lost your head when you lost your horse.'

"'Will you hold your tongues, you dogs of wives, and let me have my gun and go?'

"'Go, go, then,' shrieked the women in a chorus, 'and I hope the lion will claw you well for it!'

"The sound of half a dozen heavy blows followed this charitable wish, and it appeared that the correction was more efficacious than words, for in a moment the injured husband appeared with a gun in one hand, and a big stick in the other."

On the evening of July 8, 1844, Gerard met his first lion. Bon-Aziz and another Arab had accompanied him, but they were merely spectators of Gerard's operations. The far-echoing roars of the lion proceeded from a dense thicket. In front of this thicket the intrepid hunter stood alone, awaiting the appearance of the animal. One leaden ball against a foe that had the strength of forty men in his single arm! The match seemed very unequal. The thunderous, solemn roars filled the air. The ponderous steps of the lion came toward the opening before the thicket. His head, with its enormous mane, emerged from the foliage. He gazed with amazement upon the man who dared to face him.

If the gun missed fire—if the man failed to pierce either the heart or the brain of the huge beast, his doom was sealed. Gerard aimed for the lion's brain. After the shot was fired, the smoke hid the beast from view. Then sounded a terrible roar of pain. The smoke cleared away, and the monarch of the forest lay dead upon the ground.

After this exploit Gerard became a sort of demi-god among the Arabs, who surnamed him Katel-Siond, the lion-killer.

His services became in general request in all parts of Algeria. Lion after lion fell before his bullets. His reputation as a mighty hunter spread far and wide, and his persevering efforts saved the life and property of many an Arab who was too indolent or cowardly to face the animal himself. In his native land he was kindly received, especially by the Duc D'Aumale.

In spite of Jules Gerard's constant and open warfare with the lion, he appeared always to feel a certain regard for the majestic beast. This regard or sympathy, though creditable to the man, seems to have become rather too Quixotic. No snares—no ambushes for Jules Gerard. He speaks of these with unmitigated scorn. He must meet his enemy face to face or not at all—his skill and trusty rifle against the claws and teeth of the lion. He would take no advantage; the duel must be fair.

The most dangerous encounter he ever experienced took place in the autumn of '45. The Arabs of the tribe of Meiza sent for him, praying that he would deliver them from the presence of an old black lion. Gerard obeyed the summons. About eleven o'clock at night he saw the lion within ten paces of him. "The animal halted," says Gerard, "with his face toward me, growling with a heavy, harsh sound, and looking at me with a very wicked eye. I was all ready for his coming, and the moon was shining brightly, so that we had scarcely laid eyes on each other before a ball struck him directly in the forehead. The lion sprang at me with a roar as my gun exploded. I felt a sudden shock at my shoulder, his breast struck the stone before me, and before I could fire my second barrel or do anything to save myself, I was hurled to the ground. I found myself lying on my side, with my legs pinned fast by the rock that had rolled on me, while the lion, stunned by the blow, lay so near me that I could not use my gun. I seized my poniard, and struck the animal a heavy blow in the temple. He immediately rose to his feet, and without seeing me, walked over my body, reeling like a drunken man, and took refuge in the wood, carrying with him two inches of the blade of my dagger."

Gerard escaped with a few bruises from this terrible position—an escape which he well calls providential.

MEMORY.

They live again, those happy hours,
The time of truth and buoyancy;
They bloom again, life's withered flowers,
Revived by magic memory.
They live! My buried darlings rise
From out their long and solemn sleep,
And star-like in life's darkened skies
A gentle radiance ever keep,
O memory, kind memory!

And when my sands of life are run,
And here no more my form they see,
May I return, at least in one,
On radiant wings of memory,
Back to my unforgotten home,
Back to one loved and loving heart:
If thus I only hope to come,
E'en now I'm ready to depart,
O memory, kind memory!

OBSERVATIONS.

BY MAX ADELER.

—We are informed by an English paper, which is very exultant over the fact, that "an antiquary, after a long and painful examination of old documents, has discovered that the name of Chaucer's mother was Agnes." It is probable that no tongue will ever be able to tell what a load this takes off of our mind. For years we have been haunted by a dark and dismal dread that it would turn out that Chaucer's mother's name was Mary Jane. It brooded over us like a nightmare; it haunted us like a goblin. We would wake up at night and feel the cold chills run down our back as we meditated upon the unutterable horror which attended the possibility of the discovery that that woman's name was Mary Jane. We felt that if it should be found that she had that name, all the happiness would be blotted from our life, existence would become a burden, annihilation would be bliss, and groceries and marketing useless baubles. But her name was Agnes, and things are serene again. That is, they are partially serene; we cannot be entirely happy until some other antiquary ascertains if Chaucer's maiden aunt had a wart on her nose. Clear this up, and the world will no longer be a gloomy prison for us.

—An Alabama editor offers to name his baby after the patron who will pay his subscription the longest time in advance. He runs a great risk. When we were on the daily *Bugle* with Colonel Jones, the colonel made the same offer, and bound himself by the most solemn obligations to stick to it. The man who won the prize was named Abednego Smoot. The colonel refused to give his child such a poetic and musical title as that, whereupon Smoot sued the colonel for damages, and had him sent to jail; and after his release, Abednego Smoot not only thrashed the colonel, but started another paper, the *Morning Fog Horn*, which ran the *Bugle* into the ground and made the colonel so poor that he had to seek refuge in the almshouse. An infuriated Smoot is something terrible to encounter. Let the Alabama editor beware lest he stir one up.

—On New Year's night Chubb came home very late, and when he went upstairs his wife and children were in bed asleep. He undressed as softly as he could and then, as he felt thirsty, he thought he would get a drink of water. Fortunately he saw a goblet ful standing on the washstand, placed there for him, evidently, by Mrs. Chubb. He seized it and drank the liquid in two or three huge gulps, but just as he was draining the goblet he gagged, dropped the glass to the floor where it was shivered to atoms, while he ejected something from his mouth. He was certain that a live animal of some kind had been in the water, and that he had nearly swallowed it. This theory was confirmed when he saw the object which he spit out go bounding over the floor. He pursued it, kicking a couple of chairs over while doing so, and at last he put his foot on it and held it. Of course Mrs. Chubb was wide awake by this time and scared nearly to death, and the baby was screaming at the top of its lungs. Mrs. Chubb got out of bed and turned up the gas, and said:

"Mr. Chubb, what in the name of common sense is the matter?"

"It's a mouse, Louisa!" shouted Chubb, in an excited manner. "It's a mouse in the goblet. I nearly swallered it, but I spit it out, and now I've got my foot on it. Get a stick and kill it quick!"

Mrs. Chubb was at first disposed to jump on a chair and scream, for, like all women, she feared a mouse much more than she did a tiger. But at Chubb's solicitation she got the broom and prepared to demolish the mouse when Chubb lifted his foot. He drew back, and she aimed a fearful blow at the object, and missed it. Then, as it did not move, she took a good look at it. Then she threw down the broom, and after casting a look of scorn at Chubb, she said:

"Come to bed, you old fool: that's not a mouse."

"What d'you mean?"

"Why, you simpleton, that's the baby's India-rubber bottle-top that I put in the goblet to keep it sweet! You ought to be ashamed of yourself carrying on in this manner at one o'clock in the morning."

Then Chubb turned in. After this he will drink at the pump.

—Busby, of Trenton, celebrated his "iron wedding" one day last week, and he invited about one hundred and twenty guests to the wedding. Of course each person felt compelled to bring a present of some kind, and each one did. When Mr. and Mrs. Smith came, they handed Busby a pair of flatirons. When Mr. and Mrs. Jones arrived, they also had a pair of flatirons. All hands laughed at the coincidence. And there was even greater merriment when the Browns arrived with two pairs of flatirons. But when Mr. and Mrs. Robinson came in with another pair of flatirons the laughter became perfectly convulsive. There was, however, something less amusing about it when the Thompsons arrived with four flatirons wrapped in brown paper. And Busby's face actually looked grave when the three Johnson girls were ushered into the parlor carrying a flatiron apiece. Each one of the succeeding sixty guests brought flatirons, and there was no break in the continuity until old Mr. Curry arrived from Philadelphia, with a castiron cow-bell. Now Busby has no earthly use for a cow-bell, and at any other time he would have treated such a present with scorn. But now he was actually grateful to Mr. Curry, and he was about to embrace him, when the Walsinghams came in with the new kind of double-pointed flatirons with wooden handles. And all the rest of the guests brought the same articles excepting Mr. Rugby, and he had with him a patent stand for holding flatirons. Busby got madder and madder every minute, and by the time the company had all arrived, he was nearly insane with rage; and he went up to bed, leaving his wife to entertain the guests. In the morning they counted up the spoils, and found that they had two hundred and thirteen flatirons, one stand, and a cow-bell. And now the Busbys have cut the Smiths, and Browns, and Johnsons, and Thompsons and the rest entirely, for they are convinced that there was a preconcerted design to play a trick upon them. The fact, however, is, that the hardware store in the place had an overstock of flatirons, and sold them at an absurdly low figure, and Busby's guests unanimously went for the cheapest thing they could find, as people always do on such occasions. Busby thinks he will not celebrate his "silver wedding."

—They had a chicken show at Muncy a short time ago, and when the birds were all arranged in their cages around the hall, the committee proceeded to open the exhibition with formal ceremonies. The chairman, Mr. Moody, had prepared a long and very learned speech; but just as he began to read it, a black Poland rooster close to the stage uttered a loud and defiant crow. There were about two hundred roosters in the hall, and every one of them instantly began to crow in the most vociferous manner, and the noise excited the hens so much that they all cackled as loudly as they could. Of course the speaker's voice could not be heard, and he came to a dead halt while the audience laughed. After waiting for ten minutes, silence was again obtained, and Mr. Moody began a second time. As soon as he had uttered the words, "Ladies and gentlemen," the Poland rooster, which seemed to have a grudge against Mr. Moody, emitted another most preposterous crow, and all the other fowls in the room instantly joined in the deafening chorus. The audience giggled, and Moody grew red in the face with passion. But when the noise subsided he went at it again, and got as far as "Ladies and gentlemen, the domestic barn-yard fowl affords a subject of the highest interest to the—" when the Poland rooster became engaged in a contest with an overgrown Shanghai chicken, and this set the hens of the combatants to cackling, and in a moment the entire collection was in another uproar. This was too much. Mr. Moody was beside himself with rage. He flung down his manuscript, rushed to the cage and shaking his fist at the Poland chicken, exclaimed, "You diabolical fiend, I've a mind to bu'st you open!" Then he kicked the cage to pieces with his foot, and seizing the rooster, twisted its neck, and flung it upon the floor. Then he fled from the hall followed by roars of laughter from the audience, and more terrific clatter from the fowls. The exhibition was then opened without further ceremony, and Moody's dissertation on the domestic barn-yard fowl was lost to the world. Moody has since resigned from the society. He says he takes less interest in poultry than he used to do.

☞ A young lady at Winchester lately called upon a photographic artist, and asked him to take her picture with an expression as if composing a poem.

THE FIRST SORROW.

Mowing over hill and plain,
And the sky is all unshaded;
But the sun shines on in vain,
All its light is dimmed and faded.
Yester-morn, I, leaning forth,
Watched the dew-drop gleam and glisten
Murmuring, "It is joy, oh, earth,
Joy enough to look and listen."

Now I see the pearls as then;
But they mock me with their shining:
And I turn away again,
Longing for the day's declining.
Yesterday the summer breeze
Went soft sighing through the grasses;
Now it moans among the trees,
And I shiver as it passes.

All the flowers were fair to see,
Sweet in odor, rich in color,
Now they seem not fair to me:
All their brightness has grown duller.
Crimson rose-buds for my hair,
I had gathered in the morning;
Now they lie and wither there,
How I shrink from such adorning.

I have loved the wild birds so;
Hailed with joy each lithe new comer,
Watched them flitting to and fro,
All the long and pleasant summer.
Still they sing I know full well,
But their songs have all grown dreary;
Every one is like a knell,
And they only make me weary.

Yesterday I sang and smiled,
As if sunshine ne'er departed:
Just a merry, careless child;
Now a woman heavy-hearted.
As I sat, so free from care,
With gay blossoms all around me,
Came a whisper through the air,
Creeping onward till it found me.

"It is dead." And that was all:
Simple words and quickly spoken.
Ah! these simple words that fall
On poor hearts, and they are broken!
Death! oh, mystery profound!
In the world before me lying,
Full of life, and light, and sound,
There was not a hint of dying.

Death! and still all things go on;
Nothing changed for my bereaving.
Oh the cruel morning sun
That could shine above my grieving!
Was it yesterday I stood
Looking o'er the green hills yonder,
Deeming life so great a good—
Was it yesterday, I wonder?

Oh the nights so calm and fair!
Oh the mornings brightly glowing!
Shall I ever learn to bear
All their coming and their going?
I must journey day by day,
O'er the hills and through the meadows,
Worn and weary by the way,
Tired of sunshine, tired of shadows.

But I solace me withal,
That I journey toward the sleeping,
Where o'er tired eyes like shall fall
Far too close for any weeping.
Weary hands shall folded lie
To resume their burdens never;
In that blessed by and by
I shall rest and rest forever.

H. S.

DAVY CROCKETT ON THE TRACK;

OR,

The Cave of the Counterfeiters.

BY FRANK CARROLL,

AUTHOR OF "THE HEIR OF GLENDALE," "JOHN PARKMORE'S PLOT," ETC.

CHAPTER IX.

IN FULL FLIGHT.

Maggie Campbell, after a gay parting with her friends, the Wilsons, at their gate, had tripped lightly homeward. She had refused their proffered escort, laughingly assuring them that she feared neither wild beasts nor hobgoblins.

"If there were any young men *left* in the party," she said, "then I would be nervous and timid enough. But as long as all the gentlemen have branched off elsewhere with their girls, and there is no hope left for me, I may as well act bravely, as an old maid should."

"If Rob Gordon were here, then I suppose you would be dreadfully frightened."

"Wouldn't I, though! I would hug up to Rob as though I saw a ghost in every bush. But as long as he has played me false, I will declare defiance to all men and all goblins. Good-night," and with a gay laugh she stepped lightly on, with a speed that would soon bring her home.

Little did she dream how far away lay that home, or through what danger and distress it would be reached. She descended the slight decline to where the brook crossed the road, and setting one foot at the water's edge, sprang lightly across the stream.

She had not taken two steps beyond, however, before she was rudely stopped by an arm thrown round her waist, while a familiar voice sounded close to her ear.

"Stop here a minit, my sweetheart Maggie, I want to have a bit of talk with you."

"What do you mean, sir?" she indignantly cried. "Unhand me this moment."

"No, no, my bird," was the answer. "I can't afford to open the cage door so soon after catching my mocking-bird."

With a quick, powerful motion, she sought to break from his grasp, but he held her with the strength of a giant. She was active and vigorous, but her force was as that of a child in the embrace that now held her.

"You'd better be quiet, Maggie. I ain't ready to part with you yet. I'd like you to go a bit with me first."

Her only reply was a renewed struggle to escape, and an attempted scream, which was rudely repressed by his hand. He held a handkerchief, which was firmly forced against her lips and half into her mouth, so that it was impossible for her to give an alarm.

"That game won't do, my dear. I ain't been to all this trouble to catch you for to let you go so easy. I don't want to hurt you, but you must go a bit with me, and you'd best go quiet."

It was impossible for her to speak the stinging answer that rose to her lips, so tightly was her mouth compressed.

"Say you'll keep quiet, and I'll not gag you," he said; "but I can't have you screeching and disturbing the whole neighborhood."

He released her mouth to give her a chance to answer.

She did so by giving vent to a loud scream, at the same time striking him violently in the face, and renewing her effort to escape.

With a loud curse, he now dexterously twisted the handkerchief over her mouth, tying it behind her head with a tightness that almost prevented her breathing, and rendered it impossible for her to give vent to a sound. A moment more and he was dragging her down the course of the stream.

Fearing she knew not what, full of horror, dread, anger, and other conflicting feelings, she struggled with all her strength to break from his encircling arms.

She was not lacking in muscular power. Her backwoods training and free life in the fields and forests had given her a physical force far superior to that possessed by her enervated sisters of the cities.

Strong as her abductor was, he had difficulty in retaining his unwilling captive. The contest ended by his lifting her up bodily, in such a manner as to confine her arms, and carrying her down the stream. He trod carefully on the pebbly bottom of the brook, though his burden forced him once or twice to make a false step, and impress the muddy border with his footmark.

After pursuing this course a short distance, he left the water at a point where some scattered stones afforded him a path into the fields, that would take no impression from his tread. In doing so, he caught with one hand a bough that extended over his head, so as to assist his spring from the water. By this action he unwittingly made the mark by which his pursuers were enabled to trace his progress.

In a few moments he had crossed the field to where a horse stood tied to a tree at the roadside, saddled and bridled as if previously prepared for this flight.

It still wanted some time of daybreak, but the east was growing gray with the light of the advancing dawn, and the dim glow of the clear, star-lit skies, heightened by the gleam in the east, had enabled the villain to see the general features of his course. In the distance the horse appeared to the unhappy maiden like some immense monster, to which she was being borne for her destruction. But as they approached, the vast proportions given it by the dim light decreased, and a familiar neigh told the character of the creature before them.

"Now, young lady," said her abductor, in a voice which she had already recognized as that of her would-be lover, "as I see you don't calculate to be quiet, and are going to give me all the worriment you kin, I'll jest take the liberty to put a bit of twine round your wrists. I don't intend to hurt you, but you've got to go with me, and as you won't go easy, you've got to go uneasy."

The poor girl made as strenuous efforts to prevent this as she had already made to achieve her liberty, but equally in vain. In a moment the skilful villain had tied her hands behind her so firmly as to render her utterly helpless. Her mouth was still so closely enveloped in its bandage that she could utter no sound, and her heart beat with agony as she realized how utterly she was in the power of this man, whom she feared as much as she now hated him.

He was scarcely a minute in untying the horse and in lifting her to the saddle. Mounting himself behind her, and clasping her with one hand round the waist, while with the other he grasped the bridle, he struck the horse a vigorous blow with his foot, and the powerful animal started on a quick run down the road, heeding little the double load which he carried.

By the time the rim of the rising sun was peeping over the horizon, they were several miles distant from their place of starting, and the horse still went with a steady, quick pace that rapidly left the distance behind them.

They passed one or two houses, at a short distance from the road, but the inmates were not yet astir, and the unhappy captive looked in vain for the succor for which she hoped and prayed.

They now entered a long piece of forest-land, through which the road passed, and for several miles of the new day they were surrounded only with gray trunks and green leaves, with no life visible save that of the birds, whose matin song was in full chorus, of an occasional squirrel that looked down from his lofty perch, and of a wandering deer that paused a moment at the wood-side, gazing with large astonished eyes at the strange vision, then turned and fled with greater speed through the lonely arches of the wood.

The speed at which the heavily-laden horse had been ridden, told rapidly on its strength, and its driver was forced to let it go more slowly through the latter portion of the woods, to save its wind for the burst he might need to make in the open road beyond.

For the last mile, indeed, the animal was allowed to walk. The villain felt so sure that his precautions would baffle pursuit until pursuit would be useless, that he felt easy in this slow pace. Little did he dream that his trail was already found, and that untiring pursuers were keen upon his track.

"I ain't a-going to do you no harm," he said to his captive. "I give you every chance to take my word in an honest way, that I had took a fancy to you, and wanted you bad. You turned your back on me, and went for a feller that ain't worth my shoe-string. If you thought I were a-going to stand that, you barked up the wrong tree. Tom Gillespie ain't the man to be put off and on to suit a wench's fancy. I ain't wanting to hurt you, gal—but I've got the top hold now, and we'll see if there ain't a wrinkle in Rob Gordon's nose."

In this speech, which revealed more of his intentions than he had before suffered to appear, he took an unfair advantage of his captive, in not giving her an opportunity to reply. Yet, despite the misery and fear that possessed her whole nature, she was sufficiently on the alert to catch the name which he had let fall, either inadvertently, or in the carelessness of security.

He probably thought there was no danger of his captive escaping to reveal the fact that the assumed Dick Brown was really named Tom Gillespie, or to reveal other and more important facts which would soon come to her knowledge.

The forest borders were now passed, and before them lay a clearing of about three miles in extent. Farm-houses were visible here at intervals of about a mile apart, and in the neighboring fields negroes could be seen busily at work.

Putting the horse to his speed, they again rode rapidly onward, the animal being refreshed by his rest, and stepping out with renewed vigor. Gillespie now held his captive in such a manner as to conceal the fact of her being bound from any one not closely observing—and as he approached the nearest house, struck the horse sharply with his foot, causing him to bound forward in a swift run.

The proprietor was lounging on the porch of his house, which lay some hundred feet back, and one or two negroes were working in the grounds close beside the road.

The latter looked curiously on as the animal thundered up. Then with a sharp exclamation one of them ran back and spoke to his master. The latter leaped to his feet and looked keenly out with his hand above his eyes.

The fugitive heard a loud but indistinguishable call, for he was already past the house, and then observed some rapid movements, as if an intention of pursuing him was entertained. The prisoner kept her eyes directed hopefully backward, though her hope died out as the distance increased and no evidence of any further movement was observed.

The distance from the place appeared to be a full mile, when she saw, with gladdened heart, two mounted men ride from the gate of the house, and turn their horses' heads down the road.

Her captor caught the gleam in her backward-turned eye, and looking back, caught the sight which had kindled her gaze.

With a muttered curse he again applied his heels to the side of his horse, saying savagely, as the animal increased its speed:

"I know you, Ben Baldwin. If you're smart, you'll hold back. If you catch me, you'll find you've caught a hoss. There's some sort of fun that don't pay—and that's the fun you're after."

Another house now rose by the roadside, but there was no one visible here but a couple of women, who were attending to some flower-beds that bordered the road. The captive wrenched herself partly from the grasp with which he held her, and turned round so that these persons could see how she was bound.

With a fierce threat he grasped her again and forced her around. But her ruse had been successful; with a loud scream the women sprang up and ran toward the house, as if to give the alarm.

On, on went the fiercely trampling horse. A few feet ahead the road, which had been perfectly straight for the last mile, curved sharply round a hill, shutting the houses and the pursuers from sight. Just beyond this curve a narrow, grass-grown lane ran into the main track.

Into this lane Gillespie turned his horse at a sharp curve, and with unslackened speed rode on. At every stride the tufts of grass were crunched into the ground under the iron hoofs of the fiercely striding horse. A covey of partridges sprang from the centre of the road, and with whirring flight disappeared in a thicket at the side. Rabbits leaped from their coverts and ran wildly into the fields. The grasshopper tribe sprang up in myriads at every stroke of those resounding hoofs.

It seemed, indeed, as if this lane had been abandoned by man, and that nature had resumed her usurped rights over this portion of her domain, carpeting it, as is her wont, with grass, and peopling it with her liege subjects, the insect, bird and beast tribes. A half-filled wheel-track, and a narrow line in the centre worn bare by hoofs, were the only proofs remaining of man's occasional occupancy of the retired lane.

At two or three hundred yards from the main road it ran into the woodland, and was thenceforth bounded by two rows of magnificent trees, with straight trunks towering upward to an enormous height, fed by the rich alluvial soil in which they grew.

A thicket of underbrush here encroached upon the road, narrowing it to little more than the width of a wagon.

On with unabated speed hurried the fugitive horse, kept to his work by the boot-heels of his merciless rider, who beat a tattoo upon his ribs at every indication of a pause in his wild career.

And full need had he of speed, for the pursuers were coming on with stern, fierce progress, gaining at every stride upon the fugitives. The turn into the lane deceived them scarcely a moment. The hoof-tracks were so deeply dented into the fresh soil as to form an unmistakable track, which could be followed at full speed.

The lane, however, wound so as to conceal pursuers from pursued, and the soft road bed smothered the quick fall of hoofs. So far as their senses told them, each party occupied the road alone. And yet they both well knew that much less than a mile now separated the abductor and his victim from the resolute avengers.

Maggie's heart beat with hope as she felt that rescue was approaching, and her blood thrilled with the strong excitement incident to the earnest flight. Her senses were alert for the first sounds of the swift pursuit, and she knew well that a doubly-laden horse, pushed as theirs had been, could not long hold out against the speed of fresh and boldly-ridden steeds.

She knew that Mr. Baldwin was a man of great determination of character, and a thorough horseman, and her eyes beamed with triumph as she glanced back upon her abductor, who, with clenched teeth and a yet firmer grasp upon her waist, looked sternly forward, never once casting a glance backward in nervous dread of the pursuers.

He answered her triumphant smile in an unexpected manner. Suddenly reining in his horse he brought him to a full stop at a point where a shelf of rock crossed the road, swept bare here by the rains, though covered with soil and with underbrush in the woods.

Instantly springing to the ground, he lifted her down from the saddle. Seizing a long, slender switch that lay on the ground, lately broken from some tree in the vicinity, he brought it down with a cruel, stinging blow on the flanks of the horse that had done him such good service.

The noble beast, smarting under this keen, unlooked-for stroke, leaped wildly forward, and feeling himself free from his late burden, rushed down the road at a pace to which pain and fright lent wings.

Maggie, for a single moment free from the stern grasp which so long had held her, debated within herself thoughts of flight. But her limbs were too stiff from her unpleasant ride to leave her any hope of success, particularly with her hands still bound.

Small leisure was given her for these thoughts. Her captor almost instantly grasped her by the arm, and hurried her within the shelter of the woods. It was but a few steps before the rocky shelf became covered with a carpet of moss, succeeded quickly by grass, and then by low bushes. These increased in height as they went in, and were replaced by low trees at about twenty feet from the road, as the layer of soil upon the rock bed became thicker.

The bushy thicket was dense enough to conceal them from the road, and Gillespie crouched down, forcing his captive down beside him, and glaring fiercely through the leafy screen for the approach of his pursuers.

It was but five minutes of this anxious vigil when the captive, with throbbing heart, beheld the pursuers ride swiftly up. She well knew the resolute face of Mr. Baldwin, set in all the energy of pursuit, and as well the powerful horse which he rode.

The man who rode beside him was one of his slaves, a tall, stalwart negro, whom she also well knew as a trusted and faithful servant.

There was a momentary sensation of hope as they approached. But her whole frame throbbed with pain and despair as she saw them riding heedlessly by, and felt herself unable by sign or word to call to her aid the friends who rode so eagerly yet so vainly in her behalf.

But a moment, and they were gone. They disappeared around a bend in the road, and the sound of hoofs soon subsided into the silence of the forest, while hope perished in her heart.

CHAPTER X.

ON A FALSE SCENT.

We left Davy Crockett running briskly down the hillside toward his comrades. A few minutes brought him to the bottom of the slope, and he was not many more in reaching the isolated farm-house spoken of as Johnson's.

They had already procured horses, of which Johnson kept a good stock, and had them ready, saddled and bridled, at the door.

Mounting to the saddles, and with a cheery good-bye to the farmer, who stood, wishing them good fortune, they gave their horses the rein, the tireless dog running on in advance.

They were well mounted and pushed their steeds hard, aware that every moment lost would count adversely to their purpose.

The footprints of the fugitive's horse were plainly impressed upon the road, no other traveller having passed that way since. In a short time they reached the point where the road entered the forest. Through this they pushed with equal speed. Emerging from the thick shadows of the overhanging trees, they struck the open country again, and for more than a mile a straight reach of road lay before them, on which no trace of traveller could be seen.

They were shortly in front of the house known as Ben Baldwin's, one of the most pretentious in the district, the owner being wealthy, and possessed of a large retinue of slaves.

The eyes of the woodsmen instantly caught the new hoof-marks added to those they were following. Crockett drew up, and addressed a negro who stood by the fence.

"Is Mr. Baldwin out already this morning?"

"Yes, Mass Crockett. He'm out arter a black-lookin' devil that's runnin' off with a young gal."

"How long ago?"

"Near about an hour, or mebbe a half. We seed 'em pass, and mass geared right up and went for 'em."

"All right, Sam. We're going for them, too," answered Crockett, as he touched his horse lightly with the whip, and bounded on after his companions.

On reaching the lane the hoof-marks of pursuer and pursued led so plainly into it that there was no need of a moment's hesitation. Whirlwind led the chase, following the tracks as intelligently as did his master.

"It's nip and tuck here," said Davy. "Both parties have been making their best time. But you can see by the tread that Dick Brown's hoss is a bit spent, and Ben Baldwin is gaining."

"I hope to heaven he may overtake the villain," said Rob, excitedly. "Poor Maggie, this must be a dreadful ride to her."

Into the shelter of the forest they rode, the abundant life, which had resumed its occupancy of the lane, darting in all directions from before their headlong course.

The iron hoofs of the horses rang sharply as they crossed the bare shelf of rock we have already mentioned, and pushed into the earth road beyond.

Whirlwind still ran ahead, following the tracks, but a whistle from his master now brought him to rest, in an inquiring attitude.

"Hold hard!" cried Crockett, reining in his horse. "Pull up, gentlemen, there's some deviltry afoot here. Don't let it be said that old woodsmen had their eyes shet up by a thundering, runaway galoot like this Dick Brown."

"I don't see it," said Joe. "Here's his tracks leading on; and here Ben Baldwin has gone sharp on the same track."

"That's all right," said Davy. "There's three sets of hoof-marks there. Do you know which of them is Dick Brown's?"

"That large hoof in the centre of the track," said Rob.

"Right agin. Ben and his comrade has rid side by side, and that's kept their horses' feet from tracking the middle of the road. A good job, for I wouldn't want them tracks tramped out."

"But what do you find in them that's strange?" asked Joe.

"Don't you see it, Rob?"

"Yes, you're right, Davy. The stride is longer than it was on the other side of the rock, and it's not cut so deep. The horse has lost weight, and is going here at his best figure."

"And do you see where the ground is kicked up by the rock? He's made a jump there. Mr. Dick Brown, if you can shet up my eyes that easy, I'll sell them out to you. I'd bet a cow he's left the hoss here and switched him on with the switch that's laying on the rock. Hold my bridle a minit, Joe, I want to take a smell here."

The dog was ahead of him, coursing around and smelling the bushes that bordered the road.

"You're right, boy," said Davy, as he came near where the dog had stopped and set up a loud barking. "That's the spot, sure enough. They've broke through the brush. And here's a footprint in the grass where they've stopped. I'll go a coon it's Maggie's foot made that."

Rob sprang from his horse and ran hastily in to where Crockett had already penetrated. The path by which the fugitives had entered the bushes was plainly evident, and the hunter pointed to the footprints in the yielding soil, at the spot where they had crouched in concealment from their pursuers.

"Your sweetheart stood there inside of an hour," said Crockett. "That's the print of her pretty little foot. And there's where Dick Brown's flat-boats dug into the side. They've stooped here, sure enough, till Ben Baldwin got past."

Rob was already penetrating further into the woods in search of the trail of the fugitives. It was faintly traceable for about one hundred yards. Here, however, the rocks again cropped out, and all trace of footsteps was lost. This shelf of rock ran for a considerable distance inward, a small stream running down its westward edge. The soil surrounding was very firm, and nearly destitute of grass.

It was thus no easy matter to tell in what direction the fugitives had gone, as the rock and the running water would take no trail, and the ground was too firm easily to receive the marks of careful footsteps. The man they pursued was evidently well versed in woodcraft, and with his present advantage his trail would not readily be found.

But he had not counted on the dog. This sagacious animal, under the direction of his no less sagacious master, would be likely to set all his schemes at defiance, and quickly recover the lost trail. His master had so far restrained him, anxious to trace the visible indications before trusting to the senses of the dog. He was about setting him on the scent, when a shout from the road attracted his attention.

He at once ran to the road, whither Rob had preceded him. The shout had come from Joe, who was just then joined by Mr. Baldwin, and his sable companion, leading a stray horse.

A few words sufficed to explain their presence. They had caught the horse several miles down the road, and only then discovered that they had been duped. They had returned more cautiously, closely examining the road as they did so, in hopes of discovering at what point the horse had been abandoned.

To Rob's eager question they replied that they had but caught a glimpse of the woman, but that she seemed about the size of Miss Campbell.

"What induced you, then, to pursue?" asked the lover.

"Because Mose here saw that the girl was gagged and had her hands tied behind her. I knew at once there was some devilry afoot, and was bound to be in at the death."

Rob's indignation on hearing this intelligence was extreme. He handled his rifle in a nervous way that showed that Dick Brown would have had short shrift had he been then within sight, and his anxiety to continue the pursuit would hardly permit a continuance of the necessary questions.

At this moment Whirlwind, who had been scenting the woods in a desultory manner, gave tongue, and dashed off as if on a fresh trail.

The men were all now dismounted, except the negro. Hastily throwing him the reins, and bidding him take the horses back to Mr. Baldwin's farm, they dashed as if with one impulse into the woods, breaking through the outer fringe of bushes, and running rapidly through the more open wood within to where the dog was visible, several hundred yards distant, still giving tongue, and running rapidly on with his nose to the ground.

The chase was now exciting. With trailed rifles and nimble feet they followed the hound, now by sight, now by hearing, as he gave vent, every few moments, to a deep musical bay, that rang inspiringly through the green arches of the forest.

The ground was firm and level, and the wood rather open, except that here and there thickets intercepted their view of the dog, who pursued a somewhat devious course.

Their route in this direction continued for about two miles, they running with too much rapidity, in their efforts to keep up with the four-footed scout, to look for any further evidences of the trail they were pursuing.

Suddenly Crockett cried, still running:

"There's something wrong here, lads. No fellow, in his common senses, with men like us on his trail, would have made such a confounded twisted path through the wood. I'm ready to swear by Whirlwind, but I'm going to pull up and see what he's after. We didn't put him on the scout ourselves, and mebbe he's struck the wrong scent."

The execution of this purpose was hindered by a loud, continuous barking from the dog, who seemed to have stopped behind a thicket of about an acre in extent, that hid him from their view.

"Just as I reckoned," cried Crockett, advancing his rifle and bringing it to a full cock as he skirted the thicket. "I mought have known from the hound's voice what he was scenting. It's not Dick Brown but Dick Bar that we're after."

Turning the thicket they beheld an exciting spectacle. A large, black rolling mass stood upright on the ground, with red, open jaws, and gleaming teeth, while round it Whirlwind was leaping, barking loudly, and seeking for some vantage point for a closer attack.

But the bear was too keen to be caught off its guard. It turned as rapidly as the dog, facing it in every position, with its formidable paws raised in readiness to strike, should its tormentor come within reach.

On seeing the addition to the number of his foes, Bruin dropped on his feet and went off with an awkward motion, but at a speed far greater than was promised by his unwieldy form.

With a bitter exclamation of disappointment, Rob raised his weapon, but his excitement and anger poorly fitted him for a cool aim, and to his chagrin the bear rolled on, apparently unhurt by his bullet.

"Come, Rob, my lad, none of that," cried Crockett. "You'll wing the dog with such wild shooting. Never pull trigger when your blood is too hot. You don't know the trick of being hot and cool at the same time."

"I won't shoot again. Let the infernal bear go!" cried Rob, angrily. "We have too important an object to waste time in bear-shooting."

"That bar's got to go under," said Crockett, calmly. "We won't get Whirlwind back while the critter's about, and we can't do without the dog."

He raised his unerring rifle, but the dog was now darting about the wild beast, now catching him by the ear, now springing upon his back, and constantly hurled off by the fleeing brute, so that it was impossible to shoot with safety to the faithful animal.

The distance, too, was rapidly increasing. Crockett now ran hastily up until about sixty yards distant from the bear. At this moment the animal, having lost sight of its human foes, and pestered by the untiring dog, suddenly wheeled round, and rising on its hind legs, gave its tormentor a quick, powerful stroke with its paw, which sent the dog rolling and howling ten feet distant.

This was the opportunity for the hunter. With an impulse of anger for the disaster to his canine friend he flung the rifle, with a hasty movement, to his shoulder. His aim was taken so rapidly, that he seemed to have fired at random. Yet almost simultaneously with the report the powerful brute was seen to totter and roll over on his side, where, after a momentary convulsive movement, he lay perfectly still.

They all ran quickly up, and found that the late formidable brute was dead, shot through the heart by the unfailing bullet of the renowned marksman.

CHAPTER XI.

A LIQUID AVENUE.

Ned Gordon, on the day after his interview with Henderson, ranged the forest, armed with his rifle. His ostensible object was the pursuit of game, according to his bargain with the conspirator. His real object was to discover, if possible, the secret hiding-place of the gang of lawbreakers, and to learn in what nefarious scheme they were engaged.

Acting on the information he had gained the previous night, he made his way directly east into the forest for about five miles from Brownstown. He had at first thought of lingering about the town and watching the movements of the conspirators, and of following any one whom he saw leaving the place.

But this would have been a risky mode of operation, and he thought it best, at all events, to investigate the country at the point mentioned. That they occupied no building in the woods he felt assured. These were too often traversed for such a building to remain long concealed. It must either, then, be a house in some of the villages around, or a natural place of concealment.

To the latter view he inclined, as the most probable, since no such place could be occupied in a country village without constant risk of discovery. The plan he proposed to himself was to thoroughly search the woods in this quarter, and try if he could discover any indications of nature's handiwork.

The country, throughout this district, was of alluvial formation, forming the wide valley of the great river which ran in a narrow channel through its centre. It had, however, at one time, occupied the whole of this flat country back to the line of bluffs which bounded it at various distances from the present stream.

All this level, rich land was the contribution of the downward-flowing river, the material dug from the hills and prairies far to the north and west, and dropped here from the laden waters in rich preparation for future harvests.

The only break to the general level that he knew of thereabouts was a moderate elevation, known to the settlers by the title of Sugar Hill.

Why it had received this name, or what saccharine quality it possessed, no one could have told. It did not even resemble a sugar loaf, being a somewhat broad, flat-surfaced elevation, of perhaps one hundred feet in height, and almost completely overgrown with trees and bushes.

It had formed an island of limestone in the original river, an outcropping of rock that underlaid the country hereabout, and that swelled up, with a gradual slope, into this isolated hill.

The position into which his line of research brought him made this hill a prominent object in his circle of investigation, and he naturally inquired if it could possibly present the requisite facilities. His recollection of his old hunting trips through this country could not recall to his mind any other location half so promising as this.

All the great caves of the western country were excavated in limestone rock, washed out by the action of running water. Might not the great river, in its rushing and swirling round the base of this hill, whose summit had peered as an island above its waves, have made its way through some crevices in the rock, and have gradually excavated them into caverns of a size fit for human habitation?

This was certainly not impossible, and it was his business to test every possible theory.

In approaching the locality he crossed a narrow, grass-grown lane, which he found to be deeply indented with hoof-marks, as if a considerable party had ridden there at a furious rate, very lately.

This attracted his attention, as there was no likelihood that this retired lane, which grass and weeds had so fully invaded, was much travelled. It was crossed by occasional outcroppings of the limestone rock that formed the bed rock of the elevated location he was seeking, and throughout this portion of the woods the same rock kept appearing in ridges and bare shelves.

The elevation itself lay about a half mile to the north, lifting from the general level of the woods till it formed a landmark visible for miles around.

He now made his way gradually inward. He had not gone far before he struck the trail of a considerable party which had lately passed there at a pace that left its track clearly defined.

There was no difficulty in tracing this somewhat devious path. It led him some distance into the woods. Finally, passing round a thicket which barred direct progress, he beheld a sight on which he had not calculated.

This was the remains of a large bear, which seemed to have been very lately shot. The hide and choice pieces had probably been carried off by the hunters, and the wolves had made a midnight feast upon the remainder, until little more than the skeleton remained.

Satisfied concerning the presence of the party whose tracks he had been following, he turned northward again, penetrating more deeply into the woods.

He had not yet fired a shot from his rifle, despite his ostensible object of ganning. But now he saw that which raised all the old hunter spirit within him. Through the open aisles of this portion of the forest, and about two hundred yards distant, he beheld a noble deer stooping as if in the act of drinking.

It was a buck, with full, branching antlers, and the sight of its large, fine proportions, stirred in his soul the sentiment that had moved him at the view of many such an animal in his old boyhood hunting days.

He had the wind of the animal, and approached it with the utmost caution, concealing himself behind the trunks of intervening trees, and running quickly from one shelter to another, in such a manner as to avoid giving alarm to the animal.

In this manner he approached unnoticed until he was but about seventy yards distant. At that moment the buck raised his head, with its royal weight of branching antlers, and looked eagerly around, snuffing the air as it did so.

The hunter was now fully protected by the trunk of a large oak, and was confident that he had been neither seen nor scented by the animal. Some other cause, unseen by him, must have affrighted it.

Fearful of losing his shot, Gordon now hastily stepped out from his shelter and raised the rifle to his shoulder. Too late, however, for, at the same instant, the deer with a quick, light bound, cleared the stream. In a moment it was off at full speed among the trees in such a direction as to destroy the chances of a successful shot.

Wondering what had alarmed it he drew back warily behind his shelter. The next minute two men appeared upon the scene, advancing toward the spot that had been occupied by the deer. They were looking after the fleeing animal and had not observed him. On reaching the stream at which the buck had been quenching its thirst they paused a moment, engaged in animated conversation. One of them now turned so as to face him. He was gazing round the edge of the tree, and a single glance revealed to him the features of Bill Gillespie, his gambling antagonist of the previous evening.

Glad now that he had not fired at the deer, and hopeful that he was on the verge of an important discovery, he warily watched their movements. After a momentary pause they walked on into the woods, followed at a good distance by the hunter, who was as careful to conceal his presence as he had been in his approach to the deer.

For a full mile this pursuit continued, Gordon keeping just in sight, for he could see that the others were advancing with considerable caution, and warily looking around and behind at every few steps of their progress.

He knew that they were rapidly approaching Sugar Hill. In fact the tree-covered slope of this elevation now became visible through the close-set trunks of the forest through which they were advancing.

A short distance further and he was in full view of the thicket of bush and briar that closely enveloped the foot of the hill on this side, and ran for some distance up its flank.

Here Gillespie and his companion stopped and suddenly turned, looking keenly back over the route which they had traversed. Their pursuer had only time to dodge behind the trunk of a tree, where he remained without venturing to look out for several minutes.

When he did carefully shift his head, so as to be able to gaze through the inequalities of the bark, it was only to find that the men had disappeared—there was no trace of a living being in view.

Hastily stepping out he glanced in all directions, but without result. The thicket extended for a long distance in either direction; and if they had proceeded along its edge, they would have been yet in full sight.

The inference then was, that they had passed through it, an opinion strengthened by the fact of their having approached it so directly. But how? He knew it to be a maze of briars; and so far as he remembered, impenetrable to human foot.

Yet they must have found some avenue through it. They could not have vanished in the earth, or have flown from view over the tree-tops. The hope rose strong in his mind that he was on the right pathway to the secret den of the law-breakers, and that he was right in his deduction that this hiding-place was in some natural cavern in the limestone rock of Sugar Hill.

Leaving his covert, he stepped hastily to the spot on which he had last seen the men. Yet this advance was not made without the caution which he had hitherto manifested. He feared that they might yet possibly be in sight of this spot and might notice his movements.

But all there was of gravelike stillness. The insects and birds were taking their noon-tide siesta, and all nature seemed to be lost in slumber. The only sound audible was a faint whisper of the wind in the leaves.

The thicket here was, as he had supposed, impenetrable. It was composed of thickly-grown bushes of from four to six feet in height. Thorny vines grew and twined about these so closely as to make a tangle of briars, which could only be entered by the busy assistance of a sharp axe or hatchet.

They had not gone through here, that was evident. He could see a slight impression in the earth where they had stood, but his woodcraft was not sufficient to trace their steps over the hard ground to and from this point.

About ten paces to the left ran the stream at which the deer had been drinking. It here emerged from the thicket, through which it cut a narrow path, having evidently its source in some spring on the hillside.

The water was about two feet wide, but very shallow at the point where it emerged from the bushes. It ran over a rocky bed, gurgling down in miniature falls at every few yards of its progress.

By walking in the bed of this rivulet, over which the bushes quite met at top, the thicket might possibly be passed. After convincing himself by a walk of fifty yards in each direction, along the margin of the thicket, that it was penetrated by no other path, the hunter concluded to try the watery avenue, as the pathway by which Gillespie and his companion must have disappeared.

The water gurgled and purled around his feet as he planted them carefully in the bed of the stream, and pushing aside the overhanging bushes with the barrel of his rifle, commenced to make his way inward.

As he proceeded the stream became narrower and deeper, the bushes leaning over till they seemed to twine together and close the passage. But they were not linked by the running vines, and were easily set aside. It was, in fact, just such an arrangement as men using this for a secret avenue would have sought to produce.

In this deeper part the stony bottom became coated by a layer of mud of a rather sticky consistence, being the soil washed from the hillside and settling in the deeper pools. He now emerged in a clear spot of some ten feet diameter, and extending as many yards back. Here the rock had been washed bare of soil, and was therefore unable to support the growth of bushes.

At the upper end of this the passage through the stream seemed to be closed. It narrowed till it was not more than six inches in width, and the bushes, growing close to its margin, joined above the water, till the green surrounding wall spread without a break save in the direction in which he had come.

But he was not the man to be so lightly baffled. Confident that the gambler and his companion had entered the thicket by this avenue, he felt sure that there must be some secret passage inward. His first care was to examine the stream where it again entered the thicket. Its confined borders had deepened here till it was a foot in depth. The water was cold and clear, and the muddy bottom plainly visible.

Looking down through the running water he saw, with delight, the faintly defined marks of human footsteps. The stream here formed a pool, without motion at the bottom, so that the marks in the mud were not obliterated as quickly as they would have been in the more rapid water below.

There was no longer any doubt. He was on the track of the gambler, and probably in the secret entrance to the hiding-place of the gang of criminals who had baffled the officers of the law, and even the sharp eyes of Col. Davy Crockett.

He stopped a moment to consider whether he had not better be satisfied with his present discovery, and return for assistance before advancing further.

But Ned Gordon was not lacking in that spirit of daring which leads men into the most dangerous positions, and the natural desire to complete this enterprise himself soon decided him to endeavor to proceed.

Advance was not as difficult as it appeared. He found that the vines entwining the bushes failed to reach across the stream, or, more probably, had been carefully removed, and that the wall of vegetation was easily parted with his hands, so as to yield him a ready passage inward.

He went onward in this manner for about ten feet, stepping on the sides of the pool so as to avoid the deepest water. It now grew shallower, and widened so as to afford ready passage.

Onward by this easier path he proceeded, encircled by a dense thicket of bushes that would have deterred any one not possessed of positive knowledge of the use to which this avenue was put. To any other it would have seemed an idle and purposeless wade into the thicket, with no possible gain except wet feet and scratches from invading thorns.

The bushes grew even more dense and high as his path led him some short distance up the little slope, down which the shallow water shot with great rapidity. He was walking under the shadow of bushes higher than his head and embowered above him, so as quite to conceal him from observation by any one in the forest without.

A few steps more and what was his surprise to find himself in the opening of a narrow cavity in the rock, quite concealed by the bushes, and out of which the stream flowed.

He walked warily on, the cavity widening as he advanced, till it was some four feet wide, with a rock roof about ten feet above his head. A few steps more and it opened out into a small chamber, of some ten feet diameter and the same height. Across the floor of this, from a cavity beyond, ran the stream, while from the rocky roof depended some imperfect stalactites, paralleled by a layer of stalagmite on the floor.

While looking curiously around this strange antechamber to the cavern, he was startled by a familiar voice at his side.

"So you've dropped in to see us, then? That is very clever of you."

Turning hastily, he beheld the eyes of Jack Henderson gazing mockingly upon him.

(To be continued in our next. Commenced in No. 23.)

A WOMAN'S VOW.

BY MARY E. WOODSON.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

ANGELA TRESSYLIAN.

The halls of the St. Juste Female College were brilliantly illuminated, and crowded almost to suffocation with the *haut ton* of Paris.

It was the closing night of the commencement exercises of that renowned institution, and patrons of the school, from almost every country known to civilization, were present. Officers, civil and military, bankers and millionaires, were present, and the scene was one of imposing dignity. Orders of rank glittered upon the bosoms of proud men and fair ladies, each more or less interested in the honors to be bestowed upon relations or friends. The hour of opening had almost arrived, when Monsieur D'Etoile stepped gracefully across the platform, and led Earle Templeton to a conspicuous seat in front of the dense audience.

"You are, then, to make yourself known at your own pleasure?" he whispered the latter.

"Yes," replied Templeton. "I prefer that she should be spared the restraint which a consciousness of my presence might impose. Have no thought of me, I implore you. I would see her, above all, at her ease."

Monsieur D'Etoile then retired behind the scenes, and soon after the curtain rose and was followed by a brilliant overture by a number of the young ladies of the institute.

Then the debutantes, one by one, were introduced, and began themselves the reading of their graduating theses. Pretty girls, with the sparkling freshness of the school about them, prettily dressed, and with some very pretty ideas, as Templeton was forced to confess, though often a half-suppressed smile lurked for a moment in the corners of his expressive mouth.

"Angela Tressylian—parents English."

Earle Templeton looked up quickly, and saw before him upon the platform the child over whom he was henceforth to stand as father and tender counsellor—a child no longer now, for the perfect figure, bowing with easy grace toward him, was not that of a school-girl, but of a woman conscious of her dignity and determined to maintain it. He had scarcely remembered, when the letter of the president had come to him that Mademoiselle Angela Tressylian would receive the highest honors of his school at the close of the present term, that it had been nearly eleven years since he had placed her in his charge, and that she was now nearly seventeen years of age. He had thought of her as the same star-eyed, rather sadly pretty child whom he had taken leave of then, while she clung weeping about his neck, and whom he had seen but once since, and that for half an hour only, when she was but ten. He had been quietly speculating whether she would look as she had done then, and if he would be able to guess at her identity from those imperfect recollections. He was still picturing her as a child, when the full-grown woman burst upon him—yes, burst upon him; for as she stood there, imperial in the brilliancy of her fresh, unclouded womanhood, she dazzled him as only the rising sun would have done at that hour of the night. A strangely-blended image of father and mother, she seemed to rise up from the graves of those buried years, and the sight of her smote him with a pain he had not felt since then.

"How beautiful!" was the involuntary exclamation on every side, but he did not hear it. His ears were ringing with that terrible death-cry of Carroll Tressylian when his murderers fell upon him, and with the broken-hearted sigh of her mother when she had fallen asleep upon his breast. To-night he could not view her critically as the rest were doing. And could she stand the test of those pitiless worldlings seeking for some fault at which to carp, some defect that must detract from the startled idea of perfection in that first coup d'œil?

Truly we think so, if woman ever did.

The sweet grace and luxurious outlines of her perfect form were clearly revealed by the glare of foot and coronal lights, and its pose was that of the unconscious grace of a classic statue, with her unbroken white draperies falling about her. A wealth of tawny, amorous hair—not golden or auburn, but yellow, with the faintest suspicion of red, that peculiar shade so sung of by the poets, so seldom seen in life—was arranged about her perfectly-rounded head with an artistic skill that can be acquired from a French hair-dresser alone, and which, once acquired, was one of the distinguishing features in all the future toilettes of this really wonderful woman. Her skin was dazzlingly fair, without moth or freckle to mar its beauty; and the delicate, rose-tender light of young hope and desire that burned upon her cheeks made pensive half confessions as it swam in the depths of her large, almond-shaped eyes. The lips were beautiful—the envious of her own sex had been heard to say that they were a trifle too full—but the never-fading carnation glow was their own; and her regular teeth looked like pearls in a coral setting when they parted with one of her entrancing smiles. Altogether it was a face brilliant, tender, passionate in its depth of expression; a face that Guido or Titian would have delighted to give to canvas and make live forever. Nor had nature left her work unfinished. The sole of the white boot, just visible where she stood, was petite almost to a fault, and her fair hands revealed their faultless shape as she toyed for one brief moment with the roll of MS. she held.

The hush was instantaneous as she began to read, and preserved unbroken, save in moments of involuntary, rapturous applause, until she had finished. Templeton, recovering by slow degrees, looked at her in greater secret amazement than any one there.

Her voice was low and sweet and rich, that all-powerful and excellent gift in woman, yet her intonation perfectly distinct.

The subject she had chosen was "Hero Worship!" and she handled it with a skill rarely displayed by a novice in literature. Her imagery was as beautiful as herself; and though her reasoning might not at all times have been as vigorous as his own, Templeton observed with satisfaction that there was not one mean or common-place sentiment from beginning to end.

Amidst a thunder of applause she bowed gracefully to the audience and vanished from sight.

Templeton arose and followed her through an interior hall and along a corridor to where she stood talking for a moment with some of the professors and a bevy of her companions.

"Miss Tressylian," said Monsieur D'Etoile, "you were very anxious an hour since to know if your English guardian had arrived. Let me have the honor of placing your hand in that of Mr. Earle Templeton, and of renewing my congratulations to you both."

"Ah!" said Angela, looking up at Templeton with one of her archest smiles, "the face that did most to compose me in all the audience. I felt how much was due to myself, when I was about to incur a criticism that it seemed to me then would be pitiless. Yet if I had dreamed it was you, I think my dread of the future would have sealed my lips in hopeless confusion."

"I was, then, correct in not making myself known," he said. "But, Miss Tressylian, with the memories which your face and voice bring back to me, I must at once express the hope that fear will never be a feeling that I shall awaken in your breast."

"If your letters and instructions with regard to me have been in any wise exponents of your heart, I am sure I never shall be afraid of you," she responded, warmly.

"You will go back with the audience now?" he said. "I see from the programme that you are to sing the song of our language which never can grow old—especially to the wanderer and him whose ties have all been severed—'Sweet Home.'"

"Nay," she replied, looking now at Monsieur D'Etoile with another of those smiles which none ever resisted. "It is there that I have just begged off. You, guardian, will have ample opportunities of testing my vocal abilities in the future, and as for monsieur, he had better bear my excuses—I should only shame him to-night. My strength has positively all deserted me since my last exertion, and—indeed I cannot."

"Perhaps she is right, monsieur," said Templeton. "She has done herself and you such credit that it might be dangerous to try a woman's nerves farther."

"She has seldom failed to have her own way," replied the professor, "though I can as truthfully assert that she has never failed to use the gentle and refined arts of her sex to obtain it."

"You will then retire?" continued Templeton, looking at his ward.

"With your and monsieur's permission, yes."

"Then good-night. We will leave to-morrow for Calais, and then home." He turned away with D'Etoile, and soon after left the house.

"She has the graces of father and mother combined," he thought, with a sigh as their images arose before him. "Well, I am glad of that, for in the most fastidious society I may be proud of her."

CHAPTER XL.

STILL ON THE TRAIL.

Angela Tressylian displayed nothing of the weariness of which she had complained on the previous night, when Templeton took the seat beside her—the place that would henceforth belong to him—on the train that was to take them from Paris to Calais. Sparkling vivacity spoke in every glance and gesture, and she smiled amusedly at his suggestion that perhaps it might have been more considerate if he had permitted her to rest, at least for a day, after her exertions on the previous night.

"My exertions were not very overpowering," she replied, "I have remembered that your kind instructions to the guardians of my youth were that I should be permitted to take life easily, and I have obeyed you in full. I am afraid I have worried them not a little by reminding them of this, when I preferred my own thoughts, or my own literature as I sometimes did to the text-books of the schools."

"Monsieur D'Etoile assured me that in eleven years you had not given him as many hours of trouble."

"I wonder if, after a similar lapse of time, you will be able to say the same thing," she answered, with a smile that was for the moment half-serious. "I am afraid not, for my companions with whom I have been more intimately thrown declare me a positive tyrant."

"Perhaps they only found it a pleasure to humor your caprices," said Templeton. "And you would not expect that of me."

"Why not? Monsieur Templeton, with all your fame as a dilettante and sage, I shall not be afraid of you, I think. Do you know I had forgotten you entirely, and had even taken up the idea that you were a very old man?"

"I—well I am not young. When I was your age I should have looked upon a man of mine as I now do on an octogenarian."

"But I had been picturing you of late as a veritable octogenarian," she replied with a little laugh, "and I expected you would be pompous and stern in manner, and that you would daily offend my eyes with the sight of a very bald head and a very red nose."

"Well," returned Templeton, unbending strangely for him, "I am not bald, and as I have never been famous for color, I don't suppose it will fly to my nasal organ, unless to spite you, or from an excess of low drink, which I don't think likely either."

"I should judge not. I might have known you were still young, in thought and feeling, from your works. I have been following you eagerly through the world of letters."

"Ah! I scarcely thought you had ever heard of me—save as your guardian—the protector of your property."

"Remember, monsieur," she replied, archly, "that though a school-girl I have lived in Paris."

"Aye, true. In Paris one knows everything. And you were very happy there?"

"Yes, but I longed for the time to come when I should return to my native land. I was a little in fear too when I asked myself how my womanly tastes would coincide with yours, but since seeing you I have no fears. We shall agree famously, I am sure."

"I promised your mother, my child, when she left you a sacred charge in my hands, that the efforts of my life should be to make you happy; and you must believe, Angela—for thus I may at once call you—that in all I do, I am still bearing that promise steadily in mind. You are in the bright, unclouded morning of life; I will not tell you how soon your sky may be overcast, or how many of your young dreams can never be realized, but trust me you shall never know sorrow or disappointment if I can help it."

And looking up into the strong, resolute face, Angela Tressylian felt that she should lean upon a reed that was not broken; that in any hour of trial—she had read that they must come, sooner or later, into every life—his strong arm would support her with all a father's tenderness.

The shadow that had come over Templeton's face while he spoke, was reflected in her dark, transparent eyes as she looked up, without timidity, as without boldness, into his.

"Your parents are not living?"

Then was one of the old, old wounds torn open afresh as he answered—

"No. They both died before my remembrance; and strangers to each other, as we have been—brought together as we are now—I have just been struck with a similarity in our destinies—which I will tell you of some day, when we are domesticated at home."

That word thus spoken, sounded strangely sweet to her ears.

"Another bond that should bind us to each other," she answered. "Neither of us has ever known the tenderness of a parent's love; perhaps it was in this that your thoughts have so singularly appealed to mine in your books. We have too, neither brother nor sister. Can I dare to hope, that if I prove myself worthy of your love, I may take a sister's place in your home?"

"Let me stand to you in the double relation of father and brother," he responded, solemnly. "You will consult me where you need advice, as you would have done your own honored father; and you will be as unrestrained in my presence as though I were your brother. Thus only can we be happy together. Do you promise me this?"

"In all faith."

And in that hour, he thanked Heaven to remember afterward, she had spoken the simple truth.

Persons seeing them together thus, along the journey, wondered at the relationship of these two. Her dazzling beauty—as he proudly saw and heard when he had leisure to comment upon it, as he sat sometimes silently watching her on the route—was the theme of general comment; and her entire unconsciousness of her great charms—an unconsciousness that he thought, with a sigh, must so soon be lost amid the unavoidable corruptions of the world—was in his, as in other eyes, one of her most irresistible attractions.

"Who was the rather dashing young lady taking leave of you here, when I left you just now to look after the baggage?" asked Templeton, of his ward, when he rejoined her in the cabin of the steamer as they started from Calais to Dover.

"Oh, that was my dearest friend, Evelyn Clare, who lives on the Isle of Man," answered Angela, enthusiastically. "She left St. Juste a year ago, and is, as you truly described her, a dashing woman. Was she not beautiful?"

"Remember I only saw one eye and a part of a very good nose, for one moment," replied Templeton, "her veil hid the rest, and she was gone; so I cannot rhapsodize, if I would."

"Well, you shall do so in time, for she has just promised to visit me next spring: when she will, of course, be your guest. Her father is governor of the island. And some of these days, when you are tired of me, I am to be her sister-in-law—for she has a charming brother."

"Is that the reason of your enthusiasm for the sister?"

"No. You mistake cause for effect. I shall like the brother, on the sister's account; for I have yet to see him."

"Then when we have both seen Mr. Clare, I can better tell you whether I approve or not."

Then they fell into a discursive conversation—he pointing out the various objects of interest visible along the shore, until all had faded from view, and he went out on deck.

When he returned an hour later, he found Angela conversing with a strange lady, a lady who might no longer be in the freshness of youth, but who still possessed an unusual degree of beauty, and whose dark eyes gleamed with a singularly brilliant, half-mournful light.

"Mr. Templeton," said Angela—and he fancied for the first time that her voice had a touch of sadness too—"you do not, I see, recognize Mrs. Chelsea, a lady who says she once rendered you a service when you were ill and suffering in Paris; but, if you have forgotten the face, you still remember the deed with gratitude, I am sure."

"I do—even to the manner in which Mrs. Chelsea forbade my expressing that gratitude seventeen years ago," he answered, quickly, as he extended his hand. "I am glad to have another opportunity of assuring her that I appreciated the extraordinary sacrifices which she then made in my behalf."

As her hand touched his—which it did with evident reluctance—Angela Tressylian could but observe that Mrs. Chelsea turned deadly pale, and she was about to inquire in alarm if she were ill, when the other reassured her by resuming her seat, and answering, though with an evident effort:

"As I told you then, I deserved no thanks from you. What I did was in fulfilment of a vow made many months before, and which would bind me to a similar duty to-day."

"Whatever the motive may have been," said Templeton—he had learned to practice a greater degree of consideration for others since those days—"its results were none the less of vital importance to me; and should opportunity ever afford, I trust you will permit me to testify my sense of the obligation I owe you, by deeds rather than words. But, madam, I fear you are ill."

Was it a shuddering remembrance, Lilian Thornton, Mrs. Hartman, Chelsea, or whatever other name you choose to call yourself, of a wild, prayerful, agonized entreaty, wrung from your soul in a vain appeal to this man, when he had gone with fell determination to fix the stamp of murder upon Ralph Thornton—long years ago? Perhaps it might be; but God grant that in all this intervening time, all the bitter experiences of your wasted youth, and desolate coming age, you too may have felt some pangs of remorse for the evil your misguided vows of vengeance may have abetted; and that repentance come upon you ere it be too late!

"No," she answered after a struggle, "it is nothing, or at least it is but a passing pain to which I have been accustomed for years. Miss Tressylian"—there was another little shiver at the name—"tells me, I think, that your house is to be her home?"

"Yes, she was left as a daughter to my charge, and until I can consign her to a happier—which with her youth and accomplishments may not be long—she will find a home with me."

"And, guardian," said Angela, in her soft, winning tones, "Mrs. Chelsea speaks of living alternately in N——, and in London. Let us then hope that our chance encounter here may not be the last."

"We shall meet again," replied Mrs. Chelsea, "and I trust very soon; but in the meantime I must seek my state-room until we arrive. I am really quite overcome."

Angela, in spite of the lady's protestations, walked with her to the door.

"She strikes me as being a little singular," she said to her guardian, when she had returned, "she looked at me so closely, and spoke of you in such a strange tone when you were not by."

"Your opinion is the general one, I believe," replied Templeton, carelessly. "She is a confessed enigma that no one unravels. I hope you will not see a great deal of her; for I do not think you could associate with her, and not feel that the shadow which invests her is creeping over you. I could not."

Well for him that he could not see how this unknown woman was one day to envelope them both in its sable folds! And Mrs. Chelsea, as she lay in her room, kept murmuring over and over again:

"With her magical beauty—for she is a thousand times more lovely than the mother could ever have been—far handsomer than Nina Alvarez was—with the soul in her face, that he, in his works, professes to adore, he could not avoid it, though he were made of iron. He must—he will love her; and then, but not till then, till he is ready to clasp her to his bosom as a bride, shall he know all the dark, bitter, frightful truth. He has rallied before; but from that blow there will be no recovery; and he shall drag out the remainder of his existence with a crushing weight of shame and humiliation."

Aye, Earle Templeton, look to your armor now, and let it be invincible!

CHAPTER XLI.

ANGELA TRESSYLIAN IN SOCIETY.

They lingered but a week in London. Earle Templeton, as usual, deporting himself with all the grave dignity of twice his years—and Angela, in fresh, child-like entranced wonder at the novelties of that great city which she had never seen; but the weather was still warm, and as soon as possible, he started for N——.

The splendors of this new home astonished and delighted her. The building itself was large and finished with a nicety rarely seen in the finest specimens of modern architecture; and the internal adornings might have befitted the private residence of a king. It must have required years, even with his exquisite taste, and now limitless wealth, to have collected in every room and corridor, such an endless variety of articles of vertu of every description. Furniture of ormolu and buhl, and Dresden-framed mirrors dazzled her at every turn; but of all these, her own suite of apartments delighted her most.

How much he must have thought of her comfort in that one week they had passed in London; yet how little he had spoken.

She found that many of the beautiful adornments here could have arrived but the day before her; and their exquisite freshness and airiness enchanted her. And her first supper-bell startled her, as she lay back in a luxurious fauteuil, with the wax light gleaming over her until she seemed too fair for earth, in her own chamber, with its rich hangings of pale sea-shell pink, its bed and cabinet of quaintest device and beauty, its gorgeous mirrors, its crystal vases of flowers, its gemmed carafes of perfumes, and its nameless appendages of luxury and grace.

And when, a moment later, she floated like a soft breeze laden with delicious odors, down the broad stairway and into the supper-room, where Earle Templeton stood awaiting her, it cannot be wondered at that he still felt as if he were in a dream when he looked at her; or that his well-trained servants should have gaped until for the first time they seemed out of place and awkward.

She had a word of praise for everything: the tea, the biscuit, the cream and bonbons were all so much fresher and better than at school—though every one knew that Monsieur D'Etoile had kept a table equal to any first-class hotel; until waiters, chambermaids and cook were in raptures with the new young lady.

She had taken her seat at the head of the table, at Templeton's request, without any of the airs or affectations that other girls of her age might have assumed; and when they arose, she took his arm and passed out into the brilliantly-lighted corridor.

"Now show me our sitting-room—for I may as well inform you at once, that you will have to give me an hour or so every evening, until I get sleepy. I am not in the habit of keeping bad hours; for I have been sent to bed like a good child; but I cannot endure solitude after tea; and we will come to know each other, and be very good friends."

"Never was boon—as you are kind enough to make it—more cheerfully granted," he answered. And she could not dream how delightful it was to him to have her talk to him in this unrestrained and familiar manner—to him of whom the rest of the world either stood in awe or fear. "For if there is a time that will lie heavy on my hands, it has been this first hour or so of the night when I am usually alone, and most idle; and I remember that my youth is all gone, and that so much of its precious time was recklessly thrown away."

"Ma foi!" she replied lightly, "how often did I pretend to Monsieur D'Etoile that the faintest suspicion of a headache was overpowering, because I wanted a pretext to remain in my room, and read your last great work, that all the beau monde were growing mad about. Who was that old busybody, the utilitarian, who would weep at night when he could say 'I have lost a day!' Well, he was an old humbug, for his life was full of them, just as mine has been, I dare say. You talk of your youth being gone and your time wasted, when at forty years of age you have won a reputation to which all the world bows in acknowledgment, and your brow is as free from furrows as mine. Fie, then, guardian, Heaven must punish you yet, for you are wickedly ungrateful."

He did not answer, for he had thrown open the door of a drawing-room and stepped back with one of his courtly bows, that she might precede him. As she entered a superb grand piano and harp were the first objects that greeted her eyes, and with her passion for music she glided delightedly to the former, and running her fingers over the keys, took the seat and dashed through several brilliant performances. Then she burst into song, and her rich soprano voice rolled through the rooms and thrilled Templeton with a rush of bygone memories where he stood with folded arms looking down at her with a new light in his eyes.

"Now for your sanctum, your library," she said, breaking off at last and coming to where he stood. "But I must warn you in time that you may repent the day you introduce me there, for they tell me you have a famous collection of books and curiosities in it, and you will not be able to keep me out unless you grow absolutely terrible."

"I sincerely trust it may amuse you," he answered, leading her across into a large octagon-shaped room, whose walls were lined with splendid volumes, "and hence I had your music-room adjoining it. My sanctum, as you choose to call it, my writing-room, is just beyond, through the door leading to the left. That you would not care to visit more than once, for its bushels of old letters and parchments and quaint MSS. would do nothing but suffocate you with their centuries of dust. Here, however, you can come and go, or remain at all hours that you wish. I shall be within call to answer any questions or to give you any information that you wish."

"And in less than a week you will be wondering why I could not have remained a child forever at Monsieur D'Etoile's."

"Let us wait and see."

He began to show her his cabinet of curiosities he had picked up while a wanderer in the east; and then she took a casual survey of his books. He found her intelligent and appreciative to an extraordinary degree, her taste refined, her wit and vivacity ever ready, and the moments glided pleasantly by. He had sunk into a chair to show her something at a table, and when it was through she drew a small ottoman to his feet.

"Now I want you to tell me about my father and mother. I have been dying to hear you speak of them. Am I like them?"

He rested his hand for a moment in benediction upon her golden-crowned head. With that look upon his face he did seem to her like a father indeed.

"It is a sad story, my child."

"Ah, but I should know it, and I thank Heaven that I am to hear it from your lips. You loved them both?"

"Heaven is my witness, Angela, that I did."

He told her of their beauty and their promise—the greatness and honor of the father, and the winning graces of the mother. He enlarged on the paternal kindness and forbearance of the former to himself, without which he assured her he himself would have been worse than nothing, for his strong, unruly passions would have destroyed him. And when he came to that dark tragedy which had blighted their lives, he strove with all his wonderful mastery of language to veil, to soften its horrors; but they were still ghastly to her ears, and the tears found their way unrestrained down her beautiful cheeks.

"Dear child," he pleaded, "let me spare you the miserable details."

"No, guardian," she whispered, softly. "It has been such a comfort to my soul, to hear you speak of them as you did, and I must know it all."

He could not gainsay her farther. He knew that she had a right to know, and he told it all, though each word was a dagger to his breast.

"And I may not even have the consolation of weeping by my father's grave," she sobbed at last.

"No, Angela, the body was never found. That was taken beyond discovery by the swollen current of the river."

"Oh, merciful God, to be food for sharks or birds of prey!"

"Hush, hush. Remember, Angela, there was no consciousness. At one time when life seemed a burden to me, I had the greatest desire to be lost at sea. I had only a horror of being put under earth, and crushed away forever by tons of marble. He himself too, had sometimes expressed the same thought to me in life. And I thank God to recall at this hour, that I aided in doing him all possible justice here. I saw that vengeance was executed on his murderers."

"And my mother's heart was broken?"

He had averted his head, and his voice was strangely low.

"Can you wonder at that?"

"Oh, no. Death could have been only a relief to her. And I am so thankful—oh, so thankful that it came, though I have felt sometimes that I would have given my own life to have had her live long enough to caress me once when I might have remembered it. How fearful it must be to have the one being dearest to us in all the world snatched from us by a sudden and terrible death!"

She did not dream what a blow she was dealing him, as that widow's heart-broken cry in the vale of Bohemia long years ago came back to accuse him of the murder of her peace!

It was late that night when Angela Tressylian bade her guardian good-night, and retired to her own rooms, and he sat there long hours after, thinking over the past which their conversation had recalled, and regretting most of all his lost youth and hopes, since they had left him in thought and feeling so far removed from the tender child who had been left to his care.

Templeton was not habitually an early riser. But being awake the next morning, the freshness of the air with the perfume of flowers that came from the gardens tempted him as it seldom did, and he arose and after a careful toilette sauntered out beneath the limes that showered their leaves upon him, past the sconces sparkling with dew, and on down the shaded avenues. In one of the remote promenades he came suddenly upon Angela Tressylian, her fair hands laden with the fresh, sweet roses.

"From your inquiries of yesterday as to my breakfast hour, I had no hope of seeing you before eleven," he said, looking at his watch, and wondering critically at her marvellous beauty that could defy all hours and costumes, for she had on a simple French organdie of pure white, with a pale-blue scarf about the neck.

"Ah, it is a school-girl habit which I shall abandon when we go to London, and I am a fashionable belle. But in summer the most delightful of the twenty-four hours in a day is the one I have been accustomed to pass as I have done the one which is about ending here."

"You have been up an hour!" he exclaimed, incredulously, "and I fancied that the first notes of the lark had awakened me but a moment since!"

"The notes of the lark," she answered, smiling up at him, "have lost their charm for you. They are drowned in the plaudits that await you when all the world is a-bustle, from the tongues of men. I am not yet ambitious. I may be in the years to come."

"God forbid it!" he answered, fervently. "But I see I was not destined to 'brush the dew upon the upland lawn' this morning. There is Carlos to announce breakfast, and we must go in."

"Gladly? Our English air will give me quite a relish for your chocolate. I shall be very happy here, guardian."

And the bright, young face through all the summer and the early autumn, told him that she was happy in the innocence and freshness of this new life, and in his heart he felt a proud gratification that it was so.

Sometimes he imagined that the shadow of her father's doom and her mother's early death had fallen upon her, when he would come upon her and find that the joyous, sunny smile was quickly succeeded by a look of fathomless sadness in the eyes. But he noticed, too, that the nameless expression was oftenest there when he would turn from his own earnest labors and find her gaze concentrated upon himself.

"Guardian," she said, one evening, when he had gently reproached her for seeming less gay, "do you know what it is that troubles me?"

"Nothing serious, I hope, Angela; but tell me."

"I do not believe you are happy. I have been thinking that I disturbed the quiet of your life, and if I have, oh, will you not let me go elsewhere?"

There was a wistful pathos in the deep eyes, as she looked up through her tears.

"Silly child, I swear to you that as you are a tender care, so you are the only consolation of my life to-day."

And after that she believed that her presence was a comfort and solace to him.

Earle Templeton had been elected to Parliament from N——; and when the time of the winter session drew nigh, he took Angela with him to London. As he had anticipated, her wonderful beauty, her wit and grace, and her reputation as an heiress, soon made her the reigning belle of a large and select circle, and he found himself doubly courted by rising young men, both for his political influence and the favor they might win in her eyes.

London ladies of rank may have murmured at first that this untitled girl, with the freshness of the country about her, should have appeared in their midst and created a furore. But such was the case, and they, too, must bow to the sceptre of her charms. Her jewels were resplendent. Her dressing was as rich as it was exquisite, and she began to be quoted as the mode. Her lovers were numbered by the score, and Templeton began to fear greatly that at her tender age she might be spoiled by so much adulation; but as time wore on, his watchful eyes saw not the slightest indication of vanity in word or look, and the dignity of her manner was alone relieved by the vivacity of her conversation.

On an occasion of considerable political excitement, when Templeton was to make one of his powerful speeches, Angela had accompanied several ladies into the gallery of the Lower House, and sat for long hours, herself spell-bound, her eyes fastened upon him with a proud and tender light, while the lucid, classic, resistless flow of his oratory rolled through the house. Loud and repeated cheering greeted him at the close, and when he conducted his young ward forth, every eye was fastened upon them. In the house the next night all the hauteur of his manner and the awe inspired by his genius could not save him from unnumbered questions with regard to the young lady under his charge. "Since she is not your wife," said the Honorable Douglas Stewart, the youngest member of the house, a gay and dashing young hero from Scotland, who stood composedly at his side, "and we were all afraid she was, you will introduce me at Lady Melbourne's ball to-morrow night?"

Templeton knew that Douglas Stewart was a lion of the first blood in all circles; and however much he might object to the easy assurance which had prompted the question, he dared not refuse. His attentions to Angela Tremylian, from the first hour of their meeting, were intentionally marked. He considered her by far the most attractive woman he had ever met, and with his frank and open nature he had no desire to conceal his opinions. He was her escort at theatres, operas, balls and churches whenever she would permit him to be; and other young ladies, seeing that the Honorable Douglas Stewart was lost to them, sincerely hoped that the match would be a speedy one, before this girl could catch and damage other game in her nets. Of course they could never dream that she would do otherwise than accept him. His name still headed the list of her declared suitors, when business of a pressing nature called Templeton back to N——, a short time before the end of the season.

"Lady Melbourne has urged me to place you under her charge as her guest until my return," he said to Angela. "And with your permission I shall do so. Your time would be most agreeably spent. Her house is at once the resort of belles and beaux."

She would cheerfully accede to whatever he thought best, she declared with her accustomed amiability, and the matter was accordingly arranged.

Templeton bade her a formal adieu and hurried on to N——. He wrote her at the end of a week that his business would detain him longer than he had expected, but she might expect him to run up for her about the end of the month.

Three days from the reception of the letter she was startled by a telegraphic message—

"Your friend, Miss Clare, arrived here yesterday. Of course it is impossible for me to leave. Lady M. will see that you are safely on the train to-morrow morning, when you will reach here at 3 P. M."

Angela was in raptures. "The darling!" she cried. "It was exactly like her, not to let me know. I long to see her once more, and to be back at home."

(To be continued in our next. Commenced in No. 16.)

THE GREAT LONDON FOG.

Its Terrible Effect Upon the City.

A London letter says:—

This has been a week of fog—the densest and darkest known for several years—and people are still coughing and gasping from the poisonous effects of the villainous mixture of gas and coal-dust which has been pumped into their lungs. Business has been more than half suspended. The fog was not confined to the streets, but penetrated into warehouses and offices, so that even with gas and candles it was scarcely possible to see to read or write. Being on the eve of Christmas, this is of course a very busy time, and the docks are full of ships waiting to discharge their cargoes, but while the fog lasted—from Tuesday to Thursday, and it is hardly gone yet—nothing could be done in this way.

Even the omnibus drivers were puzzled by finding "no indication where the crescents go," and strayed from their accustomed tracks into the most unfamiliar by-streets. Navigation was entirely stopped on the Thames and the canals, and cabs could only make their way through the town with the help of a torch-bearer at the horse's head. On the whole, people in the city have not had a pleasant time of it. To breathe a suffocating and poisonous atmosphere; to have to grope about the streets in a darkness more impenetrable than that of night; and when half-blinded with the stinging vapor, to be exposed to the onslaught of erratic vehicles, makes up the sum of human misery.

In midday the passengers in the trains could not see across the platforms against which they were placed. At the same hour the Waterloo road was in absolute obscurity, so that there was neither any sign of the other side of a crossing, nor the faintest glimmer from a lamp at half a dozen paces' distance; and the utmost care was necessary in order to avoid collisions with passengers. Somewhat later in the evening there was a temporary diminution of the cloud, but during the night it again increased; and, although slightly altered in color by the diminution in the quantity of smoke it received, became, if possible, thicker and more puzzling than before. At two o'clock in the morning a person standing in the middle of Oxford street could not discern a trace of the houses on either side, and when midway between two lamps could discover no light from either.

Theatres, concert halls, and other places of amusement were all filled with the irrepressible mist, so that the stage was dimly seen amid the blaze of gas; and singers warbled, as it were, out of a cloud. Altogether the loss inflicted on London must have amounted to some hundreds of thousands of pounds.

No less than twenty-three dead bodies have been taken out of the docks east of the city; eight other persons have been drowned in the canals and in the river, and the list of persons injured in various ways in consequence of the fog, reads like the report of the wounded after a great battle. Many of the injured were knocked down and run over by carriages having wheels with india rubber tires—a new invention which has lately become very popular in the West End. These carriages are almost noiseless, and in a fog they are very dangerous.

The fog of these three days, however, was by no means a local trouble, for provincial intelligence shows that it prevailed very generally, and that it was continuous along the valley of the Thames into Oxfordshire, although in certain directions it terminated abruptly within a few miles of London.

Such fogs, although not unusual in a less severe form, are not as common in London as some people imagine, but they are so serious in their consequences that attention is being directed to their causes. The Times says:

"Meteorologists will probably enlighten us as to the nature of the connection between the fog and the high barometric pressure that has recently prevailed, and will explain why so much moisture has been precipitated from an atmosphere that does not appear to have been exceptionally laden with it. There is every reason to believe that the more effectual surface-draining has greatly diminished the frequency of thick fogs in London; but still the fact remains that at certain seasons of the year they are liable to occur, and to occur in a manner that fully verifies the oldest traditions with regard to them. At the same time, the increasing bulk and population of the metropolis, and the increasing traffic of all its great thoroughfares—the river, the railways, and the streets—render each fog more fruitful of inconvenience than that which preceded it, and therefore make it more and more imperative that the local authorities should be ready to adopt any measures by which this inconvenience may be brought within the narrowest possible limits. A fog does not appear without some warning of its approach; and, if the matter were considered beforehand, even a few hours would allow provision to be made for diminishing the various difficulties which it produces, and for affording increased facilities for the despatch of business and for the conduct of traffic."

A PARIS WINTER-GARDEN.

Imagine at the farther end of a long and splendid gallery, a ground-plot of forty feet in length, and thirty in width; a glazed roof of extreme lightness, in the form of an arch, covers the entire of this vast parallelogram at the height of about fifty feet.

The walls pannelled with innumerable mirrors, are latticed by the small green diamond-shaped apertures of a delicate trellis of cane-work which, aided by the lights reflected from the mirrors, resembles an open arbor by daylight, and is almost concealed by the intervention of a thick row of orange-trees, luxuriant as those of the Tuileries, and of gigantic camellias; the former loaded with fruit which shines like golden apples on the lustrous green of the foliage, and the latter enamelled with a profusion of purple, white and scarlet flowers. This was the border of the garden.

Five or six dense clumps of Indian and tropical shrubs, sunk in deep vessels filled with heath-soil, are surrounded by walks marbled with a beautiful mosaic of shells, and wide enough for three or four persons to walk abreast. The effect produced by this display of vigorous exotic vegetation in mid-winter, and almost in the midst of a ball-room, was indescribable. Here gigantic bananas soar to the lofty glazing of the roof, mingling their broad green palms with the lanceolated leaves of tall magnolias, several of which are already covered with flowers as odorous as they are magnificent, purple without, and silvered within, stamens of gold darting from their bell-shaped calyces. In the distance, the palms and date-trees of the East, the red-wood and Indian-fig, all robust, flourishing and blooming, form a back-ground to these immense marshes of tropical verdure—a verdure so abundant, so lustrous, so beaming, that, viewed by the splendor of innumerable lights, it flashed with the brilliancy of the emerald!

Along the trellis, between the orange-trees, and among the almonds, an infinite variety of parasitical plants entwined and interlaced themselves; here depending in festoons of foliage and flowers, there mounting in splendid spirals, further on, tangled into an inextricable net-work, they ran, wreathed, trailed along the ground, like floral serpents, or mounted aloft to the crown of the lofty glass-work: the winged passion flower, and passiflora with their large flowers of purple, dotted with azure and crowned with a diadem of deepest violet, redescended from the apex of the roof in colossal garlands, and seemed striving to rescend as they shot up their delicate spikes from the very summit of the lofty aloes.

In another place, a bignonia, with its light foliage and long calyces of bright sulphur color, is encircled by a Cape jessamine bearing those white and fleshy flowers which diffuse such delightful fragrance; these two climbers, thus enlaced, festoon with their green fringe and bells of gold and silver, the enormous velvet-like foliage of an Indian fig-tree. Still farther, a countless assemblage of the stems of asclepias, the leaves and clusters of which, bearing fifteen or twenty blooms, were so dense and so polished, that one might have supposed them bouquets of scarlet enamel, encircled by little leaves of green porcelain, threw themselves aloft to return in a variegated vegetable cascade. The borders of these clumps were composed of Cape heaths, Van Thol tulips, oriental daffodils, Persian hyacinths, cyclamens, and orris, which formed a sort of natural carpet, whose every tint and every shade blended in a tissue of splendor.

Chinese lanterns of transparent silk, some of a pale-blue, others of a delicate blush color, half hidden among the foliage, threw a soft light upon the scene. A sweet, mysterious light, produced from the mingling of these two tints—a delicate, fantastic gleam, which partook of the azure clearness of a fine summer's night, delicately tinted by the crimson gleams of an Aurora Borealis.

This immense conservatory, sunk two or three feet below the ground level, was approached by a long gallery, glittering with gold, mirrors, crystals and lights. This dazzling glare deepened, if we may be allowed the term, the penumbra whereon the outlines of these gigantic exotics were indistinctly traced, which were perceivable through a wide and lofty opening partially narrowed by two high door-curtains of crimson velvet. One might have imagined it to be a gigantic window opening on some beauteous oriental landscape in the calm serenity of a twilight night.

Seen from the lower ground of this winter-garden, where immense divans stood beneath a canopy of leaves and flowers, the gallery offered an inverted contrast to the soft obscurity of the conservatory. It seemed, in the distance, a sort of luminous golden haze, amidst which gleamed and sparkled, like living embroidery, the dazzling and varied colors of the dresses of the ladies, and the prismatic scintillations of costly jewels.

The notes of the orchestra, subdued and mellowed by the distance, and by the low and joyous hum that proceeded from the gallery, died languidly away among the motionless foliage of the stately exotic trees. The voices of those who meandered in this garden involuntarily became hushed to gentle whispers; the air, at once light, warm and balmy, with the thousand odorous breathings of the perfumed plants, the distant and half-audible music of the orchestra, soothed every sense into a sweet and languid calm. EUGENE SUE.

ODDITIES OF GENIUS AT WORK.

Rousseau composed his finest pages while walking the forest of Montmorency.

Voltaire had in his room sometimes five desks, at which he pursued different tasks.

The great romancer, Balzac, after a frugal dinner at six or seven o'clock, was called at midnight, when he took a cup of black coffee, or green rather, and extremely strong, and worked till noon.

Michelet works in the morning, and uses coffee also. As soon as he rises, at six o'clock, he swallows it. This carries him, he says, till noon.

Turgot never worked but when he had dined heartily.

Pitt never ate but at his own table, which was frugal; only when he had some important affair to discuss he took a little port wine with a spoonful of Peruvian bark.

Addison speaks of an advocate who would never plead a case without having in his hand the end of a thread drawn tightly around one of his thumbs all the time his speech lasted. The wags say it was the thread of his discourse.

Dr. Shapman relates that a celebrated advocate of London always applied a blister to his arm whenever he had an important case to plead.

Girodet never loved to work during the day. At night, when inspiration came to him, he arose, lighted candles, and, half-muffled up, painted his great dilovial cabas.

Michael Angelo did nearly the same, but with a single candle; and for statuary the effect is very different.

The historian, Mezeray, would work only with a candle, even at midday and at midsummer. He never failed to wait on his visitors, even to the street, with a candle in his hand.

Gretry, to animate himself when composing, breakfasted and took coffee, and then applied himself day and night to his piano.

Bossuet worked in a cold room with his head warmly enveloped.

It is said that Schiller, before composing, put his feet in cold water.

Guido Reno painted with much pomp. He dressed himself magnificently, and had his pupils attend him in silence ranged around him.

Sarti, the musician, composed only in darkness.

Cimarosa, by way of stimulation, sought light and noise.

Paisiello had to bury himself up in his bed-clothes to become inspired.

Variety in work is the secret of its harmlessness. "To know how to rest," says the hygienist. "To be able to rest," replies the poet, the artist, the writer.

Michael Angelo, Leonard de Vinci, Titian, Rubens, passed from the chisel to the pen or the brush. The change rested them from the preceding work; and thus, during long life, they accomplished marvellous works.

Some persons can think only standing, or in walking the room with swift strides. Some, like Montesquieu, compose in a post-chaise. One has need of complete isolation, profound calm; another of the open air and the noise of the crowd.

The atelier of Delacroix was a veritable hot-house.

Buffon wrote in lace ruffles; Alexander Dumas in his shirt-sleeves.

Houssaye works only in the day time, and in his great picture-gallery. There, with life and bustle all about him, Houssaye dictates to four secretaries on various subjects—to this one a romance, to that one a critical feuilleton, to another some political notes, and to still another a page of "The History of the Eighteenth Century."

Theophile Gautier wrote, or rather designed his feuilleton of ten columns upon a big square of paper.

Milton composed his "Paradise Lost" on a large arm-chair, with his head thrown back.

When Fox had eaten heartily he would retire to his study, envelope his head in a napkin soaked in vinegar and water, and work sometimes ten hours in succession.

Mathurin, the author of "Bertram" and "Melmoth," withdrew from the world in order to compose. When the inspiration seized him, he placed a wafer between his eyebrows, and his domestics, warned by this signal, would keep their distance.

Jeremy Bentham jotted his ideas on little squares of paper, which he piled upon each other, and this pile of little papers stitched together, was the first forms of his manuscripts.

Napoleon had his particular mode of meditation and work. When he was not in council, says Bourrienne, he stayed in his study, talked to himself and sung, or like a child, sat the arms of his chair; then suddenly rousing up, would give the plan of a monument to be erected, or dictate those immense movements which astonished the world.

☞ Mrs. Eliza Young, nineteenth wife of the much-married Brigham, whose application for a divorce is scandalizing Salt-Lake City, has prepared a lecture, in which she reveals many things concerning the prophet's private life. Of his habits, she says that "he rises with Amelia at ten o'clock, when his barber calls and makes him as good a looking man as possible, immediately after which breakfast is served by one of the older wives, they eating alone. At dinner, the prophet, Amelia, Eliza Snow, the poetess, and the housekeeper of the Beehive, have a table by themselves at one end of the room, with all the delicacies of the season, while the rest of the wives, with their families, six of which reside in this house, dine at another table on the plainest of fare."

ITEMS OF INTEREST.

☞ An Indian squaw, three feet high and 85 years old, is on exhibition at La Crosse.

☞ A Japanese student at Ann Arbor, was recently baptized and received into the Methodist Church.

☞ West Point ear rings have appeared. They are of similar design to the button worn by the cadets.

☞ A clergyman at Hazleton, Pa., recently appended a note to a wedding notice in a local paper, announcing that it was the 9999th couple he had married.

☞ A well-dressed man, apparently a mechanic, recently created a sensation in Boston, by walking about with a placard on his hat on which was inscribed "I want work."

☞ That water will find its level was recently shown at Marion, Ohio, where, on Christmas day, a Mr. John C. Water was married to a Miss Caroline Level.

☞ The official dog killer of Cleveland, Ohio, reports the killing of 1100 animals for the past season.

☞ A man in Chester county has been laid up for several weeks from the effects of a scratch on the heel, inflicted by a cat.

☞ Mrs. Samuel Colt, of Hartford, signs every check and order used by her revolver foundry, and takes a walk through the establishment twice a week.

☞ A man was turned out of a Memphis theatre because he signified his applause of an actress by shouting, "Bully for you, old tow top."

☞ The St. Louis Law Association refused to admit to membership a lawyer who advertises to obtain divorces with secrecy and dispatch.

☞ China proper contains nearly one-third of the human race, and is the most densely-peopled region of the world.

☞ A girl in Baltimore recently tried to commit suicide by setting fire to her clothing. She suddenly changed her mind, however, and cried lustily for help, which was fortunately at hand.

☞ A St. Louis alderman expressed the opinion, which a reporter was cruel enough to take down verbatim, that "horses is 'fraider of dummies than street cars."

☞ A party of burglars at Yonkers, N. Y., were recently tracked by the footprints left by them in the snow, and the whole arrested with the plunder in their possession.

☞ A modern Solomon says: "Some promises are 'more honored in the breach than in the observance,' but the expense and safety of the action depend a great deal on the acuteness of your lawyer and the temper of the woman."

☞ At Abington, Mass., recently, a young lady was making her toilet, preparatory to her wedding, which was to have taken place on the same evening, when she was taken suddenly ill, and remained in an unconscious state until she died, two days afterward.

☞ The Montreal firemen are to have a new kind of respirator, consisting of a metal case filled with glycerine and powdered charcoal. These will not only preserve the man from suffocation, but also effectually prevent them from yelling, which all firemen seem to think is particularly efficacious in extinguishing fires.

☞ Coleridge, when lecturing as a young man, was once violently hissed. He immediately retorted, "When a cold stream of truth is poured on red-hot prejudices, no wonder that they hiss."

☞ A steamer recently hauled up in New London, was found to be covered with barnacles, in some places two feet thick. The vessel had been in the water little more than a year, and during that time had been used as a ferry-boat, running almost constantly sixteen hours daily.

☞ The Rev. J. M. Drake and wife, of Lima, Ohio, have just died from poisoning. They were preparing to paper a room in their house, and in tearing down the old paper, which was of a deep-green color, dust was created, which was inhaled by them, and they were poisoned by it. They died within a short time of each other, and were buried on the same day.

☞ Among the civilized things wanted by the Emperor of Japan has been a definite birthday. A convention of wise men has finally fixed upon the 4th of November, and the Emperor liking that day as well as any other, has accepted the date.

☞ Melbourne, Australia, has a law which has recently come into operation, by which persons brought before a police bench charged with insanity, said insanity having been caused by excessive drinking of intoxicating liquors, are to be sent to prison and treated as criminal lunatics, and not, as heretofore, forwarded to a benevolent or other asylum to be treated as afflicted individuals.

☞ Among the many recent adaptations of the electric current to practical ends, is that having for its purpose the giving warning in case of a leak in the ship's hull. The wires from a battery are so located that the entrance of water into the hold establishes the current which in turn sounds the warning signal.

☞ A. Harwood, of Ipswich, has been experimenting on the popular theory, that where a fireplace is so situated that the sun can shine upon it, the solar rays will put the fire out. Mr. Harwood used night lights, which he carefully weighed, and then burned, one in the dark another exposed to the light. In every case the one in the dark used in equal times from twenty to thirty per cent. more tallow than the one in the light.

☞ A woman living near Salamanca, N. Y., recently insisted upon her little daughter, about six years old, going one evening recently to look for a shawl which had been lost on the mountains. The child went, and lost its way in the darkness—and three days after was found by some neighbors, nearly starved to death, and her hands, feet and ears badly frozen. The woman and her husband are under arrest for cruel treatment of the child.

☞ We hear of a modern philosopher's plan, by means of which every man can be his own weather prophet. "If you wish to know whether it is going to storm or not, all you have to do is to find the storm vortex and see which side of it is the most moist. Multiply this by the square of the latent heat, subtract the time of day, and divide by the weathercock. The result will be the rarification, plus the thermometric evolution of the north pole, and then a wayfaring man, though a natural know-nothing, can tell what will follow."

☞ Every one who is proposing to have his house burglarized should secure her services. She is an old woman, and lives in Opelousas, La. When the two masked men said they wanted her money, she brought them two thousand dollars with commendable promptitude; and she was so jolly about it and accommodating like, that they thought as one good turn deserves another, they would have a convivial cup of coffee with her, which they did; and as the rats hadn't eaten all the strychnine, she got her money back, and the coroner got a job, but it is not known what commission he gave her.

The Inquisitive Woman.

The other day, on the Amherst Railway, says a correspondent, I sat near a coarse-voiced woman, with nose and eyes which looked as if made expressly for prying into other people's business, and a form which indicated that she had found the occupation a thriving one. Opposite to us sat a handsome young lady in an elaborate suit of sage green, with an elegant copy of Middlemarch on her lap. The sharp-voiced woman stared at her very hard, fidgeted a good deal, and leaning over, commenced a conversation in this way:

"Book agent, I see? Have good luck?"

"You are mistaken, madam; I am no agent," (much astonished).

"Oh! Ain't canvassing? Thought per'aps you was. Some do."

"No," (looking out the window).

"You go to school, per'aps?"

"No," (with a smile).

"Oh, you don't? Thought per'aps you did," with a long respiration; and looking her over as if she thought she was not making much progress, she spied a heavy gold ring on the third finger of the left hand, and commenced again:

"Married?"

"Yes."

"Bride, per'aps?"

"Yes;" (with a glance at a tall gentleman who stood in the rear end of the car, talking with the conductor).

"Oh! and these are your weddin' fixins. I might have knowed it," running her eyes from the jaunty hat down the multitudinous folds and ruffles to the dainty French kid boots. "Husband forehanded?"

"My husband has the same number of hands as other people, madam," (very sharply), and she made the best of her way to a vacant seat at the other end of the car, while the inquisitive woman settled back, as if she felt wronged at not having met with her usual good success.

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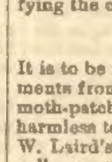
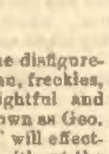

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Rhoda was not the family favorite; giddy Amabel, with her fluffy frizzes and blue eyes, was petted and indulged; but if Rhoda ever expressed a wish to go any place, it was immediately an impossibility. Oh, no! Rhoda must stay at home and take care of Ida, or else, mother wanted some bread made, and as it was not to be expected dainty Miss Amabel should take any part in such coarse work, Rhoda invariably stayed.

"Why, I don't know a gridiron from a frying-pan!" Amy was wont to proclaim, in her infantile voice, to a circle of admirers. "I often tell Rhody that she'll never be good for anything but a housekeeper;" this with a flippant laugh, and a "killing" glance at Charlie Sherrick.

Mrs. Price, her mother, was a dry, hard, fussy little woman, who never forgot that once on a time she had been a pretty blonde. It seemed strange that Rhoda's Brother Harry, with his kind, handsome face, and gentle, womanish ways, should not have cared for her, and as for Jim, he should have been eternally grateful to her for her motherly care of his motherless child; but such is man! he cared no more for her than he did for the broom which swept out his room. In her father, Rhoda had one leal friend.

"Rhody sha'n't be imposed upon," the old colonel would say, stroking the dark hair with his large hand; and in return his slippers were always ready for him, and his toast beautifully browned, in a way that passed Amabel's skill entirely.

Amabel was a profound egotist, even to the exclusion of every one else—earth, air, and sea were filled with one gigantic I. It was her ailments, her comfort, her lovers, and her flirtations. With Rhoda, she always assumed a languid, superior, slighting manner, as if her sister was very, very, very far beneath her. She was willing enough to put a flower in her hair and sit down to sew by an open window, so that all the passing gallants could see her; but when callers came, oh, dear! "Rhody" must finish her work—no one ever wanted to see "Rhody" of course.

"Amabel, dear, just put some flowers in the vases," Mrs. Price would say.

"Yes, mamma," and Amabel went straightway to Rhoda and said, "I wish you would fill the vases. I have a fearful headache."

Rhoda acquiesced without a word, and it was by her perfect taste that the parlor was so faultlessly arranged, the curtains tastefully looped, flowers in the vases, and pictures, framed by Rhoda, on the walls.

"Amy has such taste," Mrs. Price would say, all unconscious that it was not Amy's work, and so it became a settled thing that Amy had "such taste." She was also called "bright," that is to say, her conversation was a conglomeration of admirers, fashions and parties, interspersed with playful little shrieks, which she thought especially killing.

Rhoda sat making a dress, and patiently sewing the seams by hand (for Amabel had taken possession of the Wheeler & Wilson), when Amy turned round to her and said—

"I can't fix this needle; I'm afraid of pricking my fingers. Rhody, yours are so rough that it won't make any matter—come and do it;" this in a coolly imperious tone.

Rhoda rose to comply with her command, and as she did so, Amabel gave her a scrutinizing glance, and said with an affected giggle—

"Gracious, Rhody! you're so old-fashioned, one would think you came out of the ark. What do you think Charlie said? He saw you crossing the yard this morning, and asked who 'that guy' was! I was so glad that your old sun-bonnet hid your face, for I should have been mortified to death if he had seen who you were," she added, with a complacent look at her pretty dress which had "cost ever so much" at Madame Lamode's.

"You forget, Amy," answered Rhoda's low voice, "that I have a great deal of work, and I am seldom allowed the use of the sewing-machine."

"Oh, yes! I forgot that you are an ill-used heroine. Ha, ha! a heroine with such hands as yours!" she said, as spitefully as possible.

Having finished her task, Rhoda returned to her work, Amy not having vouchsafed any thanks.

"Ida, put on your hat before you go out," Rhoda said to Ida, as she was leaving the room.

The child turned round, and said, impertinently—

"Now see here! I'm just tired of that old hat—so hush up!" after which she banged the door.

Amabel laughed,—she always laughed when Ida was impudent to her aunt. She flung her work to her sister—

"Do finish it; I must go and practice 'Will you come to meet me, darling;' for Charlie will never forgive me if I don't sing for him."

You see she was "accomplished," though what she had accomplished, would have been hard to say. Rhoda had none of these accomplishments—and if any one wishes to know the reason, it was because "Rhody must stay at home and help." Not because she had no talent for such things; on the contrary, she was passionately fond of music.

That summer Amabel proposed a short trip to the seashore; but when Rhoda asked to be of the party, such a plan was vetoed. It was preposterous that she should ever feel any inclination to go away! In fact, the poor girl got quite a blowing-up on the subject from her mother. As Ida remarked at the table, with the touching gratitude of childhood—

"Aunt Rhoda got a good scolding today, and I'm glad of it!"

"Elizabeth!" cried the colonel, his heavy eyebrows knitting, "what have you been saying to Rhoda?"

"Nothing—nothing," said his wife, thinking to smooth it over; "only you see it's impossible for her to go."

The colonel sighed; he was not fond of skirmishes, therefore he said nothing—and Mrs. Price thought herself the victor.

When they were alone, the poor, good old fellow said—

"You don't mind staying at home with father, Rhody?"

"No, father," she answered, bending closely over her work.

So they went—and Rhody was left at home. For as Amy exclaimed—

"I declare I'd be ashamed to be seen at a fashionable place, with such an out-of-date poke."

To Mrs. Price's credit, be it said that such speeches were not made in her presence.

One day a lady called, and going into the parlor, Rhoda saw a plump, pretty woman—and in a moment this pretty woman was hugging and kissing her, and saying all in a breath—

"Oh, Rhoda! is it possible that you've forgotten Marah Stone? your old friend?"

"No, indeed; I have never forgotten you, Marah," answered Rhoda, her soft eyes brightening prettily.

"You see I am married—and dear Tom and I are going to housekeeping here; won't that be nice?"

After that Rhoda did not have a very dull time. Mrs. Marah Tallis was always coming to ask her advice upon the fitting-up of her new home, and consulting her taste, and asking her all about housekeeping. Something in the arrangement of her parlors did not suit Marah; and nothing would do, but that Rhoda must come and help her.

While she was there, a cousin of Mrs. Tallis's happened to see the patient little worker, and hear her speak, and asked Marah "Who the gray-eyed girl with the beautiful voice was?"

"Rhoda Price, come and be introduced."

She obeyed. Have I said that Rhoda was plain? Well, so she was, when she had nothing to enliven her; but if she had had a ride occasionally through shady lanes, or a trip to the seashore, to brighten her eyes and freshen her cheeks, she would have been a different girl. Her pretty, dark hair was put plainly back—Amabel knew many pretty ways of arranging it, but when Rhoda had asked her, she had cried, "Oh, law, Rhody, you're too stupid to learn." In the first place she was too lazy to teach Rhoda, and in the second her sister's plain dress was an excellent foil to her own gay attire.

Rufus Redmond began by admiring her voice, and thinking her a nice girl, and as he watched how perfectly and completely she worked, and what an artistic taste she had, he ended by thinking her very attractive, and liking to talk to her. Once Marah invited her to spend an evening with her; so Rhoda put on her very prettiest dress, a soft gray, that matched her eyes, arranged her pretty hair in a way Marah had taught her, and, finally, nestled a half-blown white rose in it. Marah thought her a changed girl, as she watched her talking to Rufus, her eyes shining, her pale cheeks reddening, and her sweet voice ringing gladly, while as she smiled, she showed her perfect teeth.

"Rue," (as they called him) was talking to her of Browning's poem "The Ring and the Book." "My rose I gather for the gaze of God," quoted Rhoda, softly. "I think it must have been a white rose."

"I agree with you," he said, glancing at the rose in her hair.

She looked at him with her misty-gray eyes—no one else was in the room—why shouldn't he take her hand?

"Thine eyes gray-lit in shadowing hair above," he said, very low, doubtless catching the inspiration from her look. He might have said still more, had not Marah entered.

"Rhoda's a nice girl, isn't she, Tom, dear?" said Marah, that night.

"Pitiful kind of face," assented "Tom dear."

Next day Mrs. Price and Amabel returned, and to Amabel's total disgust, the servant brought Rhoda a magnificent bouquet of fragrant white roses. How the pale face flushed as she read Rue's name on the card attached to the flowers!

"Who sent them?" asked Amy, enviously. "It must be a mistake."

"At least do not grudge me my flowers, Amabel," said Rhoda. "Rue Redmond sent them."

"Why, he's a splendid catch—rich and handsome. Better not set your cap for him, Rhody," she added, exultingly.

That evening Rue called, and would have devoted himself to Rhoda, had not the forward Amabel frustrated him, and obliged him to talk to her. His manly soul quickly appreciated the delicate compliment of her anxiety for his conversation (!), and his mental comment was "Pretty girl, and fond of me!" Lo! this was all-sufficient. Every time he called he became more attentive to Amabel. One day she sat yawning over "The Holy Grail," which Rue had sent her, upon the very slight authority of her saying that she "loved poetry," when Harry, who was just from Rivertown, entered and flung a small box into her lap. The trinket-loving Amabel opened it, and beheld with rapture a handsome pair of bracelets. Perhaps it was the rustle of Rhody's work that made him remember her, for he turned in a shame-faced sort of way, and said—

"Positively, Rhody, I forgot you."

"Since you have forgotten me so long, Harry," she said, raising her eyes, "you need not trouble yourself." He saw the reproach, for his handsome face flushed; but that night Rhoda found on her table an excellent copy of Poe's poems, which she had long wished for. "How did you like the way I mended your glove?" she asked him the next day.

"Why, Rhoda, Amy told me she had mended them."

"That was a mistake," said she quietly, for she could see right through Amy.

"Good Heavens!" what a story-teller Amy is!" was his involuntary ejaculation—then very gently, "Perhaps you have often mended my things?"

"Yes," she said, and stooping suddenly, he kissed her cheek and walked hastily out of the room.

Mrs. Tallis came and told Rhoda that she was going to Rivertown, and positively she (Rhoda) must go with her. For a moment a bright vision of theatres and operas floated through Rhoda's brain, but instantly the light in her eyes died out, and she said, in her old quiet way, "You might ask mother, but it's no use."

Impulsive Marah rushed into Mrs. Price's presence and made her request, crying, "Oh, please, please let her come!"

"Quite impossible," said Mrs. Price's dry voice. "Rhoda must take care of Ida."

"I suppose she helps you a great deal," said Marah, trying to be cordial.

"Oh, the one that helps me most isn't here!"

Marah could have wrung Mrs. Price's neck with pleasure. She said good-morning, hastened home, and flinging herself into a chair, scolded tumultuously, much to Tom's horror; called Mrs. Price a "hateful thing," and said the way Rhoda was treated was shameful. "Now, wasn't it, Tom, dear?"

Tom whistled, raised his eyebrows, and sympathizingly said, "Poor little thing!" knowing nothing of the matter.

Rhoda stared out of the window at the russet woods of Penhurst, dyed with the red sun, where the Swift, always in a hurry, brawled over its stones, in haste to reach the river. An aspen quivered in the breathless air—a quail whistled from the stubble field. Rhoda realized that her life was a failure—one of those dreary flats that stretch away and seem to touch the sky in the distance. Ah, Rhoda! perhaps somewhere in the far-beyond your life shall touch the sky.

Amy entered, quite good-natured in her triumph, as she twirled a diamond ring on her finger. "Look, Rhoda, my engagement ring! If it had been a bit less handsome, I'd have dismissed Rue on the spot."

Let us wish Rue joy of his bargain. According to her own confession, Amy "doesn't know a gridiron from a saucepan," and therefore cannot be a finished housekeeper. Maybe in after years Rue may yearn for Rhoda's—muffins. Being a man, the muffins will strike him most forcibly.

"I should never have believed it of Rue," cried Marah, when she heard the news. "That deceitful Amy! Horrid thing! I thought it was Rhoda!"

And Rhoda? Well, she lived. The bell rings, and the curtain falls. "Passez, passez, monsieur et madame!"

The fire burns low, and the weird gray shadows flit to and fro upon the wall. The ashes fall softly from the smouldering log, and the waning moon is in the sky. A church-bell rings across the wold.

"Out, out, brief taper!"

THE COSTUME BALL.

LITTLE BROWN (who thought himself irresistible as Mephistopheles.)—"Fairest Marguerite, why look upon me as a tempter?"

MISS SYNICAL.—"You, Mr. Brown! Certainly you are about the last person I should think of in that capacity."

[The Demon is exorcised, not to say "shut up."

MRS. DALTON'S HUSBAND.

BY WALLACE PUTNAM REED.

The election was over, and the Hon. Richard Dalton found himself, after a hotly-contested campaign, a disgraced as well as a defeated candidate.

The "situation" was a peculiarly unpleasant one; and the disappointed politician's face grew still darker as he glanced over the morning papers.

"The way of the world," he muttered. "Now that I am down, 'Tray, Blanche and Sweetheart, and all the little dogs bark at me!' but I will be even with them yet."

Richard Dalton, as he paced the library, with a scowl upon his brow and a dangerous light in his eyes, was, despite his nervous and excited manner, a perfect model of manly beauty, strength and grace. Although some forty years had left their impress upon his face and form, the one was still youthful and the other majestic. An artist would have regarded this man with delight. A reader of human nature would have turned away with a feeling of antagonistic aversion.

The human countenance is an epitome of the past, an index to the present, and a prophecy of the future. Richard Dalton's face indicated an evil life, a wicked heart, and a bad end.

The clock struck ten. Mr. Dalton carefully folded his papers and deposited them in a secret drawer belonging to a handsome writing-desk.

"I may need them again," he said, half-aloud, "and when I do a cow hide will be needed as a sort of commentator. These dirty editors must be taught a lesson. The idea of those fellows attacking *me* in their dingy sheets!"

The door opened and Mrs. Dalton entered the room. She was evidently in a bad humor, but her husband's brow was cleared as if by magic, and he welcomed his visitor with all the smiling grace of a lover. The lady, however, was in an obstinate mood. She was a thin, sour-visaged woman, older than her spouse by several years, and attired in the worst and most expensive taste imaginable. A few years before she had been left a widow with a large fortune and no social position, but this latter disadvantage she had hoped would be surmounted when she married Richard Dalton. Her husband's talents acquired new lustre—the borrowed light of his wife's golden treasure—and, for a brief period, he succeeded in forcing his way into the higher circles of political life; but all that was now at an end, and he stood before his late constituents condemned, defeated and forever disgraced.

"Alice, I have something to say to you," the husband began.

"Very likely," retorted the lady. "I think it is time for you to say something to me, and you will doubtless have a good deal of leisure time in future to say it in."

Without noticing this cruel fling, Dalton motioned her to a seat, and, standing before her, continued:

"Alice, I am sorely in need of money."

"Indeed!" snapped the shrewish lips of his listener.

"Yes. Money I must have, or I am forever lost."

There was an expression of vixenish satisfaction on her pinched face, as Mrs. Dalton answered:

"You have already squandered half of my fortune, and now you ask me to beggar myself. This is what comes of marrying a penniless adventurer."

"Madame!"

Mrs. Dalton winced. The blazing, lion-like eyes of her husband were riveted upon her. She burst into tears.

"Oh, Richard, think of my disappointment!"

"Is it greater than mine? Think of the mortification and chagrin which I am compelled to endure."

For a moment an awkward silence reigned. The wife looked obstinately at the floor, apparently waiting for another appeal. It was not long in coming. Again the frown disappeared from her husband's face.

"Alice," he said, in winning tones, "I must have ten thousand dollars. With that I can settle my debts, and turn over a new leaf. Will you not oblige me, this time?"

"If I let you have the money will it get you into Congress again?" asked his wife.

"Never!" exclaimed Dalton, made sincere for once by his tortured pride. "That is all over. Those confounded ring transactions have made it impossible for me ever to re-enter political life. It is a wonder that I came out of the last campaign alive. Why, I was hissed and rotten-egged all over the district!"

"And served you right!" cried the woman, with sudden fury. "You had no excuse for being dishonest—and yet you would be a liar and trickster, I see you now in your true colors. You married me for my money, and—"

"And you married me in order to get into decent society!" hissed Dalton. "Well, have I not carried out my part of the bargain? You have exhibited your diamonds and painted cheeks in Washington society for a couple of winters. Is not that enough? Great Jupiter! The bare recollection of it ought to make you a happy woman for the remainder of your life!"

What woman would forgive such a speech—what woman could? Mrs. Dalton was on her feet in an instant—and, sweeping across the room, she paused to give expression to her pent-up rage.

"Not another dollar do you get from me!" she screamed. "You sordid wretch! You have lived on my bounty, and robbed me! And now you insult me! If you choose to remain in my house—*my* house, do you understand?—after this, I will give you food and shelter. I do that much for my dogs. But you shall not squander my fortune!"

The door closed with a bang; and the Hon. Richard Dalton was left alone. White with speechless anger, he stood with hands pressed to his throbbing heart. But only for a moment. The natural firmness of the man re-asserted itself, and he coolly reviewed his present and future prospects. They were gloomy enough, and a black purpose, which had occurred to him before, now took complete possession of his mind.

He was absolutely without money, and something worse than the ordinary penalties of debt stared him in the face. He had recently overstepped that indistinct boundary-line, where business enterprise ends and fraud begins, and an arrest might occur any day. The last hope had failed him. What could he do now? This question he propounded to himself more than once. At last the wretched man raised his head and listened attentively. Everything on that side of the house was quiet.

Dalton was satisfied that he was not likely to be intruded upon, just then, at any rate. He crossed the room and opened a side-board, from which he took a decanter and a wine-glass. Filling the latter, he took from his pocket a tiny phial and mingled its contents with the wine in the glass. Then the strong man turned pale and trembled.

"I will write a farewell letter to my wife," said he to himself.

But when he looked for the inkstand it was not to be found. He remembered then that he had carried it to his chamber the night before. It would take but a few moments to get it, and he quietly left the library for that purpose, feeling assured that nothing would occur to interrupt his plan. Strange how one little incident can sometimes make or mar the success of the most important scheme!

The library contained another inmate almost as soon as Richard Dalton had closed the door behind him. It was the lady who bore his name—the woman who, until recently, had been his fellow-plotter—the creature who called herself a wife! A precious pair, these two, and well matched.

Wondering somewhat at the absence of the late occupant, Mrs. Dalton glanced around the room until her eyes fell upon the glass of wine.

"Ah, the very thing," said she, reaching for it. "I feel so faint and weak that I really need something of the kind. Now I can talk to Richard about this business. If he *must* have the money, why, something must be done of course."

She drained the glass to the last drop, and sank into a chair.

"Why don't he come?" she murmured. "Where *can* he be? I feel so strangely. I wonder if it is the wine!"

"My God!" cried Richard Dalton, as he rushed frantically into the room. His keen glance took in everything in a second, and his face blanched with horror.

"I am poisoned, Richard Dalton!" screamed the miserable woman. "And it is your work! Oh, for one hour more of life! But you shall not escape—"

"Hear me!" said her husband. "I swear I am innocent. The draught was for myself!"

"Ha! ha! ha!" hysterically laughed the dying woman. "This is of a piece with your other deceptions. You are my murderer, and as such I curse you—yes, *curse* you with my dying breath!"

There was a gasp—a rattling in her throat—and all was over.

Dalton lost not an instant in concealing the wine-glass. Naturally the quickest of men, the danger with which he was menaced made him preternaturally acute. Already had he decided what course to pursue.

Calling the housekeeper, the weeping and almost distracted husband explained matters. His wife was subject to heart-disease. He had long feared that this dreadful malady would carry her off suddenly, and now his fears had been realized.

Strange to say the family physician accepted heart-disease as the explanation of Mrs. Dalton's death; but this did not silence certain busy tongues, and when her husband, shortly after the funeral, left the community, the gossips all shook their heads and said that his departure was another proof of his guilt. These same gossips wagged their sage heads still more vigorously when, a few months later, they read the following paragraph, copied by their local papers from the London Times:

"A STRANGE SUICIDE.—The Hon. Richard Dalton, an American gentleman who has been stopping at Langham's for the last two weeks, was yesterday morning found dead in his room, under circumstances which are strongly suggestive of suicide. An empty wine-glass, found by the side of the dead man, contained unmistakable evidences of a powerful poison. The deceased was a remarkably handsome man, about forty years of age, and the motive for his rash act is wrapped in the deepest mystery."

The mystery was never explained. Perhaps it was insanity—perhaps remorse. As the Spaniards say, *Quien sabe?*

A SHARP TRICK.

BY MARK EDWARDS.

"You'd better take twenty yards or so, ma'am. You'll never get such a chance again, I assure you. There's nothing so cheap and good offered at the stores."

"I'm afeered they're too cheap to be worth anything."

The scene was the spacious porch of an old-fashioned farm-house, where a travelling dealer was displaying to the dame of the household his assortment of cloths, cassimeres, etc., in that line.

"You don't mean to insinuate that I deal in shoddy, do you?" inquired the man in an injured tone. "Why, bless you, look at the goods!"

The woman examined them critically; the quality seemed excellent, and yet she was suspicious. She had heard of worthless goods being palmed off as excellent by such dealers, and she had no desire to be taken in.

And yet as she the more thoroughly examined the merchandize, she was tempted to purchase. Every piece was offered at a low figure—far below that demanded at the country stores—the household was really in need of such supplies, and she had the cash to pay for them.

"How nice," reflected Mrs. Miller, "to purchase all I want, and have a clever little sum left over besides."

"You'll take twelve yards of this?" said the dealer, as if he decided she had made up her mind to do so.

"Yes," she answered, no longer hesitating.

"And twelve of this?" added the man, indicating a roll of cassimere. "It will make your husband and boys splendid suits. I'm selling these goods at an awful sacrifice, ma'am, but you see it can't be helped. Bankrupt stock forced on the market, and it's got to go."

"Yes," assented the farmer's wife.

Another dozen yards of different material was also disposed of, the dealer received his money, gathered up his remaining stock, and then drove off.

But hardly was he out of sight before Mrs. Miller began, in spite of the most assuring examination of her purchases, to feel herself victimized.

"These goods can't be what he represented them," she reflected. "Why, the price is just about half what it should be. I don't believe the stuff will stand wear, though I declare it looks and feels well enough."

At noon her husband came in to dinner. In a state of considerable excitement, fearing that he would chide her severely for purchasing goods which must surely prove shoddy, Mrs. Miller revealed the fact of her bargaining with the dealer.

Farmer Miller was indignant at the very beginning at what he styled his wife's want of sense.

"You oughtn't to have touched 'em, Sophrony; you might have knowed you would be cheated. Them travelling fellows is all rascals—how often have I told you that? the money's just throwed away!"

"But look at the goods, John. They seem to be all right!"

"Oh, yes, they seem to be, of course; but make 'em up, and you'll have to put patches on after the first day's wear."

"It can't be that the fellow tricked me so," declared the wife, resolutely, warming into a defence of her action. "Look at this piece, John."

John did look, but was not convinced that his doubts were groundless.

"Shoddy's queer stuff, Sophrony. It'll look all right, in spite of the closest searchin', till you've been put to the expense of makin' it up; *then* it will go to dust, like old rotten rag carpet. I'm sorry you was so green, Sophrony."

And John ate his dinner and went back to his work.

In the afternoon a second light vehicle drove up to the farm-house—drove furiously up, as if important business was meant.

A man leaped from the carriage, hitched his horse, and advanced quickly to the door.

"Was there a person here to-day selling goods at half price?" he demanded.

"There was a man here selling goods very cheap," returned Mrs. Miller, with an uneasy feeling.

"Humph, yes! Well, they were stolen; you might have known that."

"Stolen!" ejaculated the farmer's wife.

"Stolen of course. How many did you buy?"

"Fifty dollars worth," replied Mrs. Miller, truthfully.

"I'm sorry for you, my good woman; you will lose your money; the goods must all be given up."

"Given up!" she echoed, in a tone that implied resistance to such a demand.

"Don't attempt to make a fuss. *The receiver is as bad as the thief*," said the man, blandly, but threateningly. "Produce the goods, and there'll be no further trouble to you."

Mrs. Miller in her ignorance was dismayed. She had heard of persons being arrested for receiving stolen goods, and imagined she had exposed herself to that danger.

She gave up her purchases without further demur, though with immeasurable secret regret at her loss. But she had this poor satisfaction—the goods were not shoddy; she had not been deceived in her judgment of them. The man took them and departed. In a little while it was known that precisely the same game that had been played upon her had been played upon not less than a dozen other residents of the neighborhood.

The two men were in collusion—fellow-rascals. The first sold really valuable goods at half price, and received the money; the second followed and gathered up the stock under the pretext that it had been stolen.

And thus they did a paying business on a small capital.

Answers to Correspondents.

PAY YOUR POSTAGE.—Authors and others often send us letters and manuscripts not fully paid. In these cases the Department here enforces payment of the deficiency—which we either have to pay, or to decline receiving the letters or manuscripts. Authors will also bear in mind that the Department now requires letter postage on all manuscripts—therefore it is often cheaper, as it is always safer, to send large packages by express.

WE cannot undertake to answer questions relating to the acceptance or rejection of manuscripts in this column. And there is no occasion of writing to ask whether we will examine a manuscript. Send it on, and we will examine it; keeping a copy, to avoid all danger of loss—as we do not hold ourselves responsible for the safe return of manuscript.

"IMPATIENT," (Russellville, Mich.,) complains that her question was not answered as soon as she desired. She says she is "a woman, and therefore can't wait." She ought to have a better reason than that for her impatience. We answer all proper questions promptly, yet letters must take their turn. Correspondents must remember that, as we go to press in advance, a delay of some weeks is necessary before their questions and our replies can appear. A little patient watching of the Correspondents' Column will bring things all right. Some clear line of that kind might be positively beneficial to a number of our readers. Patience can be improved by cultivation.

PHONOGRAPHER, (Springfield, O.,) asks: "1st. Is there a phonographic journal published in Philadelphia? If so, who publishes it? 2d. Is there a phonographic school in Philadelphia?" 1st. No, nor in any other city in the country, we believe. 2d. Phonography as a branch of study is taught in several of our educational institutions, but none is devoted to it alone.

H. A., (Philada.,) writes: "1st. Many thanks for the interest you and M. L. S. B. have taken to ascertain the authorship of the poem, 'If We Knew.' The one I refer to commences—

'If we knew the woe and the heartache
Waiting for us down the road.'

It was published about three years ago in the Post. 2d. Will you do me the favor to publish Longfellow's poem, 'The Legend Beautiful?'" 2d. We must decline your request. The poem is long, and already familiar to many of our readers, who would doubtless prefer original matter.

"TRIX," (Andover, O.,) asks: "What ships did Sam Patch take, at what places, and when was he killed?" Sam Patch, who believed that "some things could be done as well as others," made many famous leaps, the last and fatal one of which was at Genesee Falls. The event occurred Friday, Nov. 13, 1829.

J. W. H., (Franklin Co., Missouri,) writes: "Will you allow me to say that an answer recently given to one who inquired whether there could be frost unless the mercury sank to 32 deg., while technically correct, is calculated to mislead? The thermometer shows the temperature of the atmosphere generally in its immediate neighborhood. Now the blades of grass, some kinds of leaves, and fibrous substances generally part with their heat more rapidly than the air. Their rapid cooling off during the nights will cause them to be covered with frost before the mercury falls to 32 deg. If the instrument hangs (as is generally the case) a few feet from the ground. Years of observation have taught me that if the mercury has sunk to 39 deg., our tender plants will have been nipped by slight frost, and that at 38 deg. the ground will freeze." We are obliged to you for your communication. At the same time we think that to be technically correct in this matter is to be absolutely correct. We were not supposing, when we made our statement, that the thermometer was to "hang a few feet above the ground." We were answering, however, that the difference between the temperature of the surface and that of a few feet above, was often as great as you report.

W. A. McC., (Williamsport, Pa.,) asks: "1st. Why are pen-knives so called? 2d. Is rollo, in arithmetic, of any practical use in after-life? 3d. How many steps are there in Independence Hall, from where the old bell hangs to the top of the steeple? 4th. Do you not think that the building is unsafe from the effects of constant use, and extreme old age? 5th. Was General William Hull, who fought in the war of 1812, a coward? 6th. What are the duties of a civil engineer? 7th. Is libel allowed, without being punished, in political campaigns? 8th. What is the legal rate per cent. of interest in Idaho? 9th. What is the width of the Delaware river at the ferry, at the foot of Market street, Philadelphia? 10th. What do you think of my handwriting?" 1st. Because they were so much used in making the old-fashioned goose-quill pen. 2d. A knowledge of any branch of arithmetic would be pretty apt to serve any person in a practical way some time in life. 3d. There are 109 steps from the ground floor of the hall to the highest point of ascent in the steeple. 4th. We do not think that it is the least unsafe. The wooden steeple that surmounted the old hall was regarded some years ago as unsafe, and consequently taken down. We would rather trust our persons in old Independence Hall than in many new buildings we know of. 5th. The court-martial by which Gen. Hull was tried, after a session of eighty days, found him guilty of three charges—treason, neglect of duty and unsoldier-like conduct. He was sentenced to be shot dead, and his name to be struck from the rolls of the army. The court strongly recommended him to the mercy of the President, on account of his age and revolutionary services. President Madison pardoned him, and he retired to his farm to live in comparative obscurity under a cloud of almost universal reproach for a period of twelve years. On his dying bed he declared his belief that he was right as a soldier and a man in surrendering Detroit. He had the consolation of living, before his death, a growing sympathy for him in the partially diseased public mind, which prophesied of future vindication and just appreciation. Loosing says he believes that Gen. Hull acted throughout the entire campaign from the purest principles of patriotism and humanity. His weakness, evinced at times by vacillation, was not the result of cowardice but of excessive prudence and caution. 6th. A civil engineer plans the construction of such works as canals, railroads, bridges, docks, etc., makes surveys of routes, estimates of expenditures, all measurements, calculations, etc., relating to the progress of the work, superintends active operations of building, and takes the entire mechanical responsibility of the enterprise. 7th. No more than at any other time. 8th. Ten per cent., we believe. 9th. A little less than a mile. 10th. It is poor, but easily read.

BETSY JANE, (Prairie Chicken Range,) writes: "1st. Please inform me what is meant by Trinity Sunday?" 1st. It is the day on which the feast in honor of the Holy Trinity is held. We omit your second question, as it is a problem, not similar to one we recently gave.

YRINNA, (Walnut Grove, Ohio,) asks: "1st. Is —— —— a real name Mrs. Johnson? 2d. Is 'Little Samuel' offered as a premium yet? 3d. Does Mrs. Henry Wood write for any American periodical now? 4th. Will she write for your columns next year? 5th. What is your opinion of my handwriting?" 1st. Yes. 2d. No; our supply of the picture is exhausted. 3d. No. 4th. Owing to the state of her health, she will write no long story, and probably very little of anything the present year for any periodical. 5th. It is not great. We are beginning to wonder if the repetition of this question is not becoming a little tiresome to many of our readers, who don't care for our opinion of our correspondents' handwriting. To give it may gratify individuals, but our aim is to interest all; and, therefore, we object to purely personal queries.

FOUR CORRESPONDENTS, H. G., W. B., T. N. and J. W., (the three former of Philadelphia, the latter of Norristown,) enclose to us in one envelope a long list of questions, of which we select the following to be answered: 1st. Would you recommend a person who believes that he is qualified for the service to become a private detective? 2d. Is it necessary to be a policeman first? 3d. Would it be wrong for a young man of nineteen to marry a young girl? 4th. Would you admit matrimonial advertisements to your columns? 5th. How many wives do the laws of Turkey permit a subject to have? 6th. What causes the earth to revolve on its axis and around the sun? 7th. Who was the first martyr? 8th. Can you give a good recipe for making bay rum? also pomade and a good cosmetic? 9th. Which is the best hotel to go to in New York? 10th. Who is MacMahon? Is he a married man? 11th. Is the firm of —— reliable? 1st. We would not advise any person to become a detective, although it is a useful occupation, honestly followed. 2d. No. 3d. Not wrong, perhaps, but inadvisable. As the parties in the case mentioned by our correspondent have known each other but a week, they would do well to remain single awhile longer yet; their admiration of each other may cool as suddenly as it began. 4th. Emphatically we would not. 5th. The number is not limited, we believe. Few Turks have more than one wife. 6th. The power of God, primarily; secondarily the great laws of attraction, gravitation, etc. 7th. Nobody with certainty knows; one of Eve's daughters, perhaps—martyr to some oppressive fashion of those early days; or a son of Adam—martyr, if not to tight boots, to something similar. 8th. Bay rum is cheapest bought. Clean, sweet hog's lard perfumed, makes a good and cheap pomade. We object to the use of cosmetics, save such as we named in a recent number—bathing, exercise, temperance in eating and drinking, etc. 9th. There are no good hotels anywhere—the best are only endurable for a little while. 10th. He is President of the French Republic; one of the Marshals of France, distinguished for his brilliant military services extending over a period of more than forty years. He has a wife and children. 11th. We know nothing of them.

"FIFTEEN," (Philadelphia,) asks: "What is the meaning of the term *Nisi Prius*, as applied to Courts—that is, to which is it given?" It is a phrase applied to terms of court, held generally by a single judge, with a jury, for the trial of jury causes. The words mean *unless before*, and their application to a court took its rise in an English legal fiction, of no applicability to this country. But lawyers delight in these antiquated stupidities, of which the law has many, although probably not one lawyer in ten understands their meaning. Test the lawyers of your acquaintance with the present one.